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Trends in Quality of Life - Turkey: 2003–2012

Abstract

[Eurofound] Over the past decade, Turkey has undergone huge economic and social change. This report uses the monitoring tool developed by Eurofound – the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) – to capture changes and developments regarding the quality of life of Turkish people, measured at three periods over the past decade: 2003, 2007 and 2012.

The report examines the most important improvements in quality of life during this time frame and assesses whether or not all social groups benefited equally. It explores the impact of recent policy changes and charts new expectations that may be emerging in Turkey. Responses from a representative sample were analysed and compared with the survey results for all EU28 countries.

Keywords

European Quality of Life Survey, EQLS, Turkey, quality of life, European Union

Comments

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Eurofound

Trends in quality of life

Turkey: 2003–2012



European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS)

Trends in quality of life

Turkey: 2003–2012

Abbreviations used in this report

AKP	Justice and Development Party (Turkey)
EEC	European Economic Community
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
EQLS	European Quality of Life Survey
ESS	European Social Survey
GDP	Gross domestic product
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NEET	Not in employment, education or training
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment (OECD)
PPS	Purchasing power standard
SGK	Social Security Institution
TUIK	Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu – Turkish Statistical Institute
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WHO	World Health Organization



Eurofound

Trends in quality of life Turkey: 2003–2012

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Table of contents

Executive summary	1
Introduction	5
1: Economic, social and political background	9
2: Progress towards convergence with the EU	19
3: Improvements in services and well-being	27
4: Progress in gender equality	47
5: Family life and support	61
6: Developments in social cohesion	67
7: Conclusions	79
References	81
Annex	89

Country groups and codes used in the report

Country groups

EU27	EU Member States (as at the time of the survey, 2012)
EU28	EU Member States (as at the time of reporting, including Croatia)

Country codes

28 EU Member States

AT	Austria	FI	Finland	NL	Netherlands
BE	Belgium	FR	France	PL	Poland
BG	Bulgaria	HR	Croatia	PT	Portugal
CY	Cyprus	HU	Hungary	RO	Romania
CZ	Czech Republic	IE	Ireland	SE	Sweden
DE	Germany	IT	Italy	SI	Slovenia
DK	Denmark	LT	Lithuania	SK	Slovakia
EE	Estonia	LU	Luxembourg	UK	United Kingdom
EL	Greece	LV	Latvia		
ES	Spain	MT	Malta		

Candidate countries

MK	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia ¹
TK	Turkey

¹ MK corresponds to ISO code 3166. This is a provisional code that does not prejudge in any way the definitive nomenclature for this country, which will be agreed following the conclusion of negotiations currently taking place under the auspices of the United Nations (http://www.iso.org/iso/country_codes/iso_3166_code_lists.htm).

Executive summary

Introduction

Over the past decade, Turkey has undergone huge economic and social change. This report uses the monitoring tool developed by Eurofound – the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) – to capture changes and developments regarding the quality of life of Turkish people, measured at three periods over the past decade: 2003, 2007 and 2012.

The report examines the most important improvements in quality of life during this time frame and assesses whether or not all social groups benefited equally. It explores the impact of recent policy changes and charts new expectations that may be emerging in Turkey. Responses from a representative sample were analysed and compared with the survey results for all EU28 countries.

Policy context

Despite the global recession that struck most European countries from 2008 onwards, the Turkish economy boomed in the 10 years from 2003 to 2012. Real GDP per capita increased by 38% and the rate of GDP growth per annum was 5.3% in 2003, 4.7% in 2007 and 2.2% in 2012 (against the EU average of -0.4% in 2012). Although this changed in 2014, when the Turkish lira lost 30% of its value, suggesting a more fragile economy than was previously assumed, Turkey fared well over the period under review, with extensive reforms implemented in health, education and pension policies.

Rapid social changes accompanied Turkey's transformation from a traditional agrarian society to an industrial and, later, service economy. Massive urbanisation (72% in 2012) put Turkey well above the EU average (41%). Yet, alongside many positive changes, political tensions rose to the surface notably in the public protests in Istanbul's Taksim Square during 2013.

Key findings

According to the evidence, people in Turkey became much more satisfied with their lives in the period 2003 to 2012. Life satisfaction increased from 5.6 to 6.6 on a 10-point scale, and by 2012 was closer than ever before to the EU28's population-based average of 7.1. Similarly, average Turkish ratings of happiness increased.

Economic growth and a changing society

Economic growth enabled social policy modernisation, resulting in the introduction of a universal health service, an expansion of education as well as improvements in state pensions and social services. Generally dissatisfied in 2003, Turkish people are now above the EU average in satisfaction with health services (6.7), self-assessed health (7.5) and reported improved access to health services. Satisfaction with education (while constant in the EU) leaped from 4.5 to 6.2 in Turkey. Satisfaction with pensions and social services also rose.

Satisfaction rates, however, were low in 2003, and even by 2012 satisfaction remained low for certain issues. For example, people's satisfaction with their experience of the education system was still lower than in the EU and 39.6% of young people leave school early. While problems with accommodation decreased, Turkish people reported problems with the environment, related to litter, noise, traffic, water and air. Nonetheless, satisfaction with standard of living rose significantly, there was a marked decrease in poverty and the proportion of people having difficulty in making ends meet halved, falling to 22% by 2012.

Social indicators related to Europe 2020 targets

Turkey measures well against many Europe 2020 targets. Employment rates increased and, as noted above, poverty rates decreased significantly. Regarding public services and quality of society, Turkey has been either scoring close to or exceeding the EU average. While large gaps exist in terms of wealth and education, they are decreasing and in general the population is becoming less deprived.

Despite these improvements, problems remain. Deprivation remains higher in rural areas and among older people. Two-fifths (40%) report problems with keeping their home adequately warm, buying new clothes or affording a meal with meat, chicken or fish every second day. Rates of female employment, early school leaving and tertiary education are still a long way from EU targets, as is expenditure on research and development.

Social disparities and inequalities

Turkey has a high birth rate and a young population. Young people report poverty less than older people and their satisfaction with services was generally higher. While economic progress profited everyone, a high Gini coefficient of 40, compared to the EU's 30.6, suggests important differences in quality of life for different population groups.

The countryside still lags behind in provision of and access to services, but not in terms of satisfaction with services. Satisfaction with services, however, is lower for those with a lower income or education level.

Gender inequality

Gender inequality remains stark, both in the private and public sphere. With female employment at only half of the EU average and a large share of female early school-leavers, many young women are absorbed into households or the informal economy, which accounts for 30% of female employment. Women are virtually absent from politics and public life, and with the recent resurgence of traditional gender norms, urbanisation and modernisation might take a while to off-set inequalities.

Family remains a cornerstone of Turkish society, providing social and financial support, as well as a source of jobs. However, reported preferences for spending time elsewhere may indicate frustration with limitations imposed by family solidarities and control.

Quality of society

Rapid changes and rising prosperity impacted on quality of society and social cohesion. Trust in people improved in urban areas but declined in rural areas, suggesting that urbanisation created problems for traditional social relations. Trust in government declined in both Turkey and Europe.

Perceptions of tensions between groups increased between 2007 and 2012. Rising economic prosperity seems to have loosened social cohesion, at least in the shorter term.

From 2003 to 2012, volunteering, political and civic participation rates were low and they declined during this period. With young people more likely to participate, this might be changing. Voter turnout remained high; constantly more than 80%. The 'Taksim events' suggest that Turkish people feel strongly about who governs them, even if they lack the mechanisms to influence this between elections.

Policy pointers

This report points to various ways in which social policies could help the future development of Turkish society and mitigate social divisions and risks. Despite clear signs of progress on the economic and employment fronts, there are many issues which remain to be tackled.

Rapid urbanisation and modernisation have led to problems with accommodation and urban environment: noise, litter, air and water pollution, traffic congestion, crime and poor standards of housing need to be addressed.

High rates of early school-leavers and young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) remain a problem, which suggests the need for a policy push to provide opportunities for young people and assistance in their transition from school to work.

Gender issues remain a problem. Policies are needed to ensure that young women gain from educational improvements, are supported in finding jobs and that employment opportunities for women are opened up. The traditional patriarchal division of labour in households is increasingly being questioned, with improvements in education and employment for women helping to counterbalance it.

Policy should address social tensions between rich and poor, management and workers, young and older people and, especially, between racial and religious groups. It cannot be assumed that rising prosperity alone will automatically eliminate these problems.

The traditional family as a nucleus of Turkish society has become subject to change, not least in relation to migration and changing aspirations. Developments such as transparent job-seeking opportunities and better educational paths for young people would help provide alternative sources of support.

Finally, widening political and civic participation through stimulating civil society and participation (especially for women) might help to reduce some tensions identified in this report and avoid eruptions of protest that have recently characterised Turkey.

Introduction

Turkey has undergone rapid economic modernisation and great improvements in public services in recent years, but important challenges remain. The views and experiences of ordinary citizens need to be taken into account in future developments; this report on trends in quality of life in Turkey provides this information.

Policy context

In 2012, Turkey was the 18th largest economy in the world (World Bank, 2013a). In contrast to some European countries, Turkey's economy rebounded vigorously following the global crisis, with an average growth of close to 9% in 2010–2011 (OECD, 2013d). In 2012, employment was low but rising for women (30.9%) and more or less stable for men (75%). Overall employment in 2012 averaged 52.8%, while the monthly unemployment rate varied at around 8% (Eurostat), with the informal economy still playing a major role. The latest available figure from the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK, 2013) shows an unemployment rate of 10% in December 2012.

According to the OECD 'Turkey has made considerable progress in improving the quality of life of its citizens over the last two decades' (OECD, 2013b). Notwithstanding, according to the OECD's Better Life index, Turkey still ranks low in a large number of areas when compared to most other OECD countries; these include housing, jobs and work–life balance, the environment, income, community, education and life satisfaction (OECD, 2013b).

In its 2013 progress report on Turkey, the European Commission points to the crucial importance of the country and the challenges that lie ahead:

Turkey is a candidate country and a strategic partner for the European Union. Turkey, with its large, dynamic economy, is an important trading partner for the EU and a valuable component of EU competitiveness through the Customs Union. Turkey has a strategic location, including on energy security, and plays an important regional role. The Commission underlines the importance of ongoing cooperation and dialogue on foreign policy issues. Equally, the EU remains an important anchor for Turkey's economic and political reforms. The events surrounding Gezi Park have highlighted the importance of promoting dialogue across the political spectrum and society more broadly and the need for respect of fundamental rights in practice.

(European Commission, 2013a)

One of the most important challenges facing Turkey is the low participation rate of women in work and politics. The latest European Commission progress report on Turkey states that while legislation and action plans are in the process of being implemented, actual practice and enforcement are lacking. Political representation remains a challenge, especially in the run-up to the local elections scheduled for spring 2014, presidential elections following later in the same year and upcoming general elections in 2015 (TAIEX, 2013). Women still make up a much smaller proportion of the labour force than in EU countries in general.

A second issue is political unrest; at the time of writing, public protests against the current government suggest that the views of citizens might be different to those in power. Thirdly, much economic activity takes place in the informal rather than the formal economy and is not therefore part of public accounts. Fourthly, differences between regions, especially between urban and rural areas, remain stark. Finally, despite great improvements in public services, access is far from universal. The rapid modernisation of Turkey has brought its own stresses and strains to the social fabric of the country, and these are explored in the present report.

One question that remains to be addressed is: given the impressive economic performance of Turkey, what are the effects on the citizens of the country and on its social fabric? How do they view these developments and what improvements or

disruptions to social life are of concern to them? The report will address key matters related to social development, such as the quality of life in general, the role of public services, problems of social exclusion, social cohesion and gender.

Aim of the report

This report investigates trends in quality of life in Turkey over a 10-year period (2003–2012). It aims to provide a comprehensive assessment of changes in quality of life in Turkey within the larger context of recent Turkish and European developments, as well as past and current policies. It also maps important quality of life developments during this period and tries to determine the main factors behind such changes, as well as their implications.

Outline of the report

This report consists of six interlinked chapters, which aim to provide a consistent picture of main developments over the past 10 years (2003 to 2012). Chapter 1 gives background information on economic, political and cultural developments in Turkey, as well as charting the country's progress towards EU accession. Chapter 2 compares EU and Turkish developments in quality of life. Chapter 3 looks at improvements in services and well-being. The following chapters address the remaining parameters of social change for citizens: progress in gender equality (Chapter 4), family life as a cornerstone of Turkish society (Chapter 5) and developments in social cohesion (Chapter 6). The final chapter offers a summary of conclusions and related policy pointers on trends in quality of life in Turkey.

Analytical concepts

This report is based on Eurofound's multidimensional 'quality of life' approach (Eurofound, 2003 and 2004), which is a broad concept used in social research concerned with measuring overall well-being within a society. A multidimensional concept, it covers objective and subjective indicators and refers to individuals' life situations. In use since the 1970s, it has been adapted over time to reflect changing social conditions and policy needs. Aiming to empower people to choose their lifestyle and achieve their goals, the quality of life concept goes beyond the living conditions approach that focuses more on the availability of material resources. It combines three important characteristics, which together give a fairly complete picture of actual quality of life:

- a 'micro perspective, where the conditions and perceptions of individuals play a key role';
- 'the description of several life domains' emphasising 'the interplay between domains';
- 'individual perceptions and evaluations ... linked to objective living conditions'. (Eurofound, 2004)

The report considers both objective and subjective elements of quality of life. Where possible the analysis is supplemented and expanded on by reference to aggregate statistics.

A further analytical concept is that of social cohesion. Social cohesion is a key concept in European social policy and can be traced back to early sociological works by Émile Durkheim (1952) and Ferdinand Tönnies (2011). Social cohesion considers social bonds that hold societies together and the sense of solidarity that produces commitment to others and to society as a whole. In large and complex societies, these social relations need to be reinforced through institutions and participation, as well as other methods for inducing a sense of loyalty and common purpose. In the context of rapid modernisation and social change, traditional solidarities might be under threat (Beck, 1986) and therefore Turkey is a particularly interesting society to consider. Hence, sense of trust in others and trust in governing institutions are important indicators of social cohesion. Other indicators include perceptions of tension between different groups within society and how these are managed. Growing inequalities between social groups may disrupt social

cohesion unless they are effectively managed; this is why people's sense of well-being and satisfaction are important promoters but also outcomes of social cohesion.

Social inclusion is another important analytical concept used in European social policy. It refers to the way in which individuals are linked into their society and therefore feel themselves to be part of it. This has important implications for the social cohesion discussed above (Walker and Walker, 2012). At a basic level social inclusion can mean participation in the labour market; therefore unemployment would be an indicator of social exclusion. However, it can mean a whole range of additional dimensions such as levels of participation in civil society, voter turnout and the possibility of participating in public life and public debate (Habermas, 2002). So for example, if women are not participating to the same extent as men, they could be said to be socially excluded. Social inclusion means that citizens are able to make an impact on their society; a high level of social inclusion should therefore be reflected in life satisfaction and satisfaction with different elements of society (Abbott and Wallace, 2012). Levels of social inclusion can be improved through social policies that ensure different groups in society are able to participate economically, politically, socially and culturally. The EQLS offers various measures of social inclusion, such as information on voting, participation in civil society and employment rates, as well as on the proportion of people feeling left out of society.

Social cohesion, social inclusion and quality of life are all aspects of social quality, and together form a way of understanding the quality of society (Beck, 1986; van der Maesen and Walker, 2012). Social quality represents the overall way in which society enables people to lead the life that they want to live under conditions facilitating them to do so. Therefore, social quality is the overall outcome of social cohesion, social inclusion, socioeconomic security and the empowerment of citizens to control their lives.

Note on methodology

The European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) is a main data source of the 'beyond GDP' debate. It provides new insights into the individual situation and perceptions of European citizens. It was run for the third time in 2011–2012, thus providing three waves of interview data. The sample for Turkey comprised 996 respondents in 2003, 2,000 in 2007 and 2,035 in 2012. The EU28 comparative data (with Croatia missing in the first wave) is based on 25,261 interviews in the first wave, 31,626 interviews in the second wave and 36,517 interviews in the third wave.

The report provides information on trends in the main quality of life domains, such as overall life satisfaction, subjective well-being, living standards, public services, quality of society, family and social life, social participation, community involvement, housing, local environment, public services, health status and health services. It looks at general developments and effects of the economic crisis and developments in Turkey in comparison with EU28 average figures. The report identifies advantaged and disadvantaged groups and monitors their situation over time.

Basic descriptive analysis allows for self-explanatory tables and figures based on average values, quartiles and proportions, as well as standard deviation and interquartile range. All results presented in this report are statistically significant at the 5% level.

Descriptive trend analysis for domains of special interest is presented by 'cones' and 'splits'. While cones represent the overall development of indicators in Turkey–EU comparison, splits investigate developments within Turkey for different socioeconomic groups. For data available for 2012 only, 'snapshots' are used to complement the trend analysis with additional important indicators of quality of life.

Cones (see Figure 1 for an example) are graphical representations of changes in quality of life over time. While upper and lower bounds, or lines, represent the highest and lowest EU28 country values, the EU28 average figure, represented

by a black diamond is population-based. The range formed by the upper and lower bounds (the outer cone) provides information on what happens at the edge of all 28 countries over time: if decreasing, countries come closer; if increasing, countries grow apart. The inner cone or quartile range (between the orange markers) includes countries between the 25% and 75% quantile ranges: the 50% of countries around the EU28 average. Of the 28 EU countries, seven countries fall below this inner cone, another seven countries above it and 14 countries within it. The 25% (75%) marker is the average of the 7th+8th (21st+22nd) country values. The dotted blue line shows Turkish developments over time in relation to general EU28 trends.

Splits investigate the development of indicators for different socioeconomic groups within Turkey, looking into gender, age (the young, middle-aged and older populations), living area (rural and urban), education (primary, secondary or tertiary), and income differences (by comparing the lowest and highest income quartiles). Colours in the related gap charts refer to these groups; transparent bars are for gaps not significant at the 5% level in certain years. The split analysis allows detailed insights into improvements or deteriorations in quality of life of various groups and thus enables developments to be monitored regarding social inclusion and social exclusion.

Finally, to identify the most relevant factors for changes in overall life satisfaction, **multivariate regression analysis** was applied. Using grand mean centring, such analysis allows the discovery of factors resulting in quality of life deviances from an average person living in Turkey. Repeated for all three years, the regression reveals the main (positive and negative) drivers of overall life satisfaction and whether they remained the same between 2003 and 2012, allowing relevant groups for targeted policy measures to be identified.

Economic, social and political background 1

This first chapter provides country-specific information and highlights key economic and social developments, as well as current policy issues and societal themes which are drawn from a range of sources. These will be investigated and addressed in greater detail in the EQLS analysis later in the report.

Main developments from 2003 to 2012

The period from 2003 to 2012 represents a decade of sweeping and profound changes in Turkey. Hardly any sphere of life escaped the winds of change that swept over politics, law, economy, the healthcare system, the educational system, international relations, lifestyles and other areas. If asked to give a starting date for these changes, it would have to be 3 November 2002 when the newly founded Justice and Development Party (AKP) won 365 of the 550 seats in the Grand National Assembly with 34.3% of the popular vote and formed a majority government. Since then, the AKP has increased its electoral support in succeeding general elections.

The many political, legal and constitutional changes that followed were hailed as giant steps to further democratise the system by many while they were criticised by others for doing exactly the opposite. Either way, the AKP is currently in the process of overhauling the system once again – including important public offices and services, which have a huge bearing on the quality of society in Turkey and on the population's quality of life. The healthcare system and the educational system, for example, have been subject to frequent and often radical and contradictory changes.

Until recently, even the critics of the ruling party (AKP), including some members of the opposition parties, were lauding the government's economic performance. Indeed, the Turkish economy weathered the global financial and economic crisis with minimal damage and, on average, registered a healthy growth rate in the last decade. Budget discipline has been strictly observed and public debt as percentage of GDP stands at an enviable rate when compared to EU countries.

However, that picture was greatly tarnished during 2013 and particularly in the last six months of that year. Turkey is now universally referred to as one of the 'fragile five' (Brazil, South Africa, India and Indonesia being the other four) and the Turkish lira (TRY) has lost its value by almost 30% in recent months against the US dollar (USD) and the euro. The praise for the 'Turkish economic miracle' is now being replaced with fears about whether or not the private sector will be able to service its short-term obligations. There is unanimity of opinion that the growth rate will be substantially reduced and that this will have inevitable consequences on employment levels.

Perhaps one of the most profound developments of the AKP decade was the agreement between Turkey and the EU to restart full membership negotiations in 2005. But the euphoria did not last very long and the negotiations have been proceeding very slowly since then. In fact, in the last three years they almost stalled.

Since 2002, Turkey's path has never been straight or well-defined regarding politics, economics, law, healthcare, education, gender equality, international relations and other areas. Rather, it has always been full of leaps forward and equally dramatic reversals. Needless to say, this state of affairs has had a deep impact on both quality of life and perceptions of quality of life. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to take a close and objective look at quality of life issues in Turkey, particularly by comparing these issues in 2003, 2007 and 2012.

Population, geography and the EU

The Republic of Turkey is a transcontinental country with a diverse cultural heritage, located mostly in western Asia (it makes up 97% of Anatolia) but also in south-eastern Europe. With a population of approximately 75,628 million people and an area of 783,562 square kilometres (Eurostat, 2014), it is home to a mix of ethnicities and languages. Most of the

population is Turkish (70%–75%) or Kurdish (18%)². The vast majority of the population is Muslim, estimated at 98.6% in 2010 (Pew Research Centre, 2012).

Turkey today has a quite heterogeneous society. Striking differences exist between rural and urban areas. Urbanisation increased rapidly throughout the years considered here; the share of the urban population grew from 66% in 2003 to 72% in 2012 (World Bank, 2014). In recent decades, Turkey has been subject to continual transformation, from an agrarian to an industrial and later service-based society, which has had important social and economic implications. The process has been very dynamic, driven by migration into urban centres where industrial development occurs and people from quite different social, cultural and denominational backgrounds live (Inanç, 2006).

Turkey has a very young population in comparison to EU28 countries. With a comparatively low share of older people (7.3%), population ageing in Turkey is much less of an issue than in the EU, where in 2012 those aged 65 years and over comprised 17.8% of the total population. The share of very older people (those over 80 years) is much lower in Turkey too, at 1.4% compared to the EU28's 4.9%. Yet, total dependency ratios are similar to those in the EU28, with a lower old age dependency ratio compensated by a higher young age dependency. Despite the fact that Turkey's share of people under 15 years decreased from 29.3% in 2003 to 25.3% in 2012, it was still much higher than the EU28 average of 15.6%.

The median age of the Turkish population in 2012 was 29.7 years (Eurostat, 2013; or 30.1 as reported by TUIK, 2013), amounting to not even three-quarters of the EU28 average of 41.5 years. The working age population (those between 15 and 64 years) increased in the 10-year period, from 64% in 2001 to 67.4% in 2012, slightly exceeding the EU28 average of 66.6%. Turkey's population consists of a nearly equal mix of men and women (Eurostat, 2014d).

In recent years, infant mortality rapidly declined, from 24 to 12 children per 1,000 live births. Although the Gini coefficient – a measure for unequal income distribution – declined only slightly over the years (from 43.4 % in 2003 to 40% in 2012), poverty was reduced quite remarkably nationwide, but especially in urban areas, to which a large share of the population migrated: measured by the poverty headcount ratio at the urban poverty line, poverty decreased from 22.3% in 2003 to 8.9% in 2009. At national level, it decreased from 28.1% in 2003 to 17.8% in 2007 (World Bank, 2014).

Turkey's growing economy and diplomatic initiatives over recent years have led to its recent recognition as a regional power. One of the largest economies in the world, with per capita income steadily growing over the last decade, Turkey has become an important player at the EU's eastern border. It is a member of the Council of Europe, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). It is also one of the G-20 major economies – a forum for international cooperation on important global economic and financial issues that annually brings together finance ministers and central bank governors, as well as leaders of the major industrial countries.

Eager to forge links with its European neighbours, Turkey had as far back as 1963 signed the Ankara Agreement, creating an association between Turkey and the European Economic Community (EEC) with the aim of membership. In 1987, Turkey reapplied to join what was then still the EEC and was declared eligible to join the EU in 1997. It initiated full membership negotiations with the EU in 2005 and today has the status of a candidate country (European Commission,

² The figures presented in this report rely on various calculation methods and sample differences, resulting in slight deviances between statistics related to sources used. Figures for ethnic groups, for example, are rough estimates only, since census data on ethnicity are not available and sample surveys produce widely differing results.

2013b). Negotiations have been ongoing for a long time, with only moderate success. Until today, of the 35 negotiation chapters (policy fields) for EU accession, not even half have been opened and only one (science and research) has been provisionally closed again (European Commission, 2013b).

As for all candidate countries, the European Commission produces a yearly progress report on Turkey, which monitors in detail recent and long-term country developments and progress on the way to EU common policy goals. The Commission's 2012 progress report on Turkey highlights several positive policy initiatives but also voices concern regarding fundamental rights:

the successful launch of the positive agenda to support and to complement the accession negotiations, through enhanced cooperation in a number of areas of joint interest: political reforms, alignment with EU law, dialogue on foreign policy, visa, mobility and migration, trade, energy, and counter terrorism. It welcomes Turkey's work on a new Constitution via a participatory process. However, concerns are growing regarding Turkey's lack of substantial progress towards fully meeting the political criteria; the situation regarding the respect for fundamental rights continues to be a source of serious preoccupation.

(European Commission, 2012)

This concern was reinforced in the summer months of 2013 when public protests on Taksim Square in Istanbul, which had started as sit-ins held by citizens around the issue of building in Gezi Park, erupted into nationwide protest movements against Prime Minister Erdogan.

Accordingly, the next European Commission progress report on Turkey's accession bid in October 2013 stressed similar issues as the one before (European Commission, 2013a). Being already the 15th of its kind, some believe that it was published at a rather 'inauspicious time, with Turkey's EU accession process having slid into something worse than just abeyance' (Armstrong, 2012). It has been criticised for failures such as 'the lack of further steps towards a political solution to the Kurdish conflict, concerns about restrictions on freedom of expression and press self-censorship, judicial deficiencies, gender inequality and worrying signs of rising discrimination against Alevis' (a religious group with origins in Shia Islam in Turkey). This report has been widely interpreted as one of the most critical reports on Turkey issued by the EU (Armstrong, 2012).

Yet, the government – despite being in disagreement on the handling of the Taksim issue and facing rising doubts about the value of EU accession – saw the Turkish progress report as proof that Turkey had come closer to European economic and democratic standards in terms of democracy, human rights and economic development. The Turkish minister for EU affairs at that time, Egemen Bagis – later replaced amid allegations of a corruption scandal – said that he was pleased that the report emphasised important recent Turkish reforms and that 'the European Commission's support for fresh talks on a new policy area proved Turkey was making progress in the reform process' (Reuters, 2013).

By the beginning of November 2013, after Bagis' request to not further block accession negotiations and the EU's agreement that talks should continue, chapter 22 on regional policy and coordination of structural instruments was finally opened for discussion (Spiegel, 2013a, 2013b; Council of the European Union, 2013).

Economic development, inflation and the 2008 crisis

The economic situation in Turkey over the last 10 years has been characterised by steady growth and economic development, only temporarily reduced by the 2008 crisis. After many years of extremely high inflation, peaking again at the beginning of the last decade (in 2001 it was 56.8%), a new lira (TRY) was introduced in 2005 and inflation has remained much lower ever since. While inflation still amounted to 25.3% in 2003, it fell below 10% afterwards,

fluctuating between 8% and a little over 10%, with the lowest inflation rate measured in 2009 (6.3%) and 2011 (6.5%) (Eurostat, 2014d). However, it rose to 7.4% in 2013 and is still a cause for concern for 2014.

Gross domestic product (GDP, at market prices) increased throughout the years and rose from TRY 555.3 billion in 2003 to TRY 854.8 billion in 2012. The recent European economic crisis in 2008 seems to have impacted on Turkey to a lesser degree. Although the ‘Turkish economy was hit hard by the global economic crisis’, it recovered fast and strong (World Bank, 2013b). The economy had already started to slow down in 2007, but the global financial events of late 2008 led to a sharp contraction starting in the last quarter of 2008 until growth resumed in the last quarter of 2009. The recovery was rapid, resulting in an only temporary decline of GDP in 2009 (-4.8%). Otherwise, real GDP growth rates were positive from 2003 to 2012, with the highest increases in 2004 and 2005 (9.4% and 8.4%), as well as shortly after the European crisis in 2010 (9%) and 2011 (8.8%). Average real GDP growth from 2003 to 2012 amounted to nearly 5%. In 2012, real GDP growth averaged at 2.2%, with further increases anticipated in the future.

Accordingly, GDP per capita (current prices, in euro) in Turkey increased steadily over the last 10 years, with a temporary setback after the 2008 crisis. While it amounted to a little over €4,000 in 2003, it rose to more than €6,700 in 2007 and €8,470 in 2012.

Recent calculations by the World Bank based on GDP per capita (in USD, current prices) indicated a tripling of per capita income in Turkey over the last decade (World Bank, 2013a). However, this was seriously doubted by Turkish economists like Ege Cansen (2013) and attributed to changes in the lira-dollar exchange rate only. As Emre Deliveli, a well-informed economist and local columnist, pointed out in a recent article for Hurriyet Daily News:

The rise in nominal GDP per capita in dollars (from 2003) until the end of 2012 turned out to be 132 percent. PPP-adjusted dollar GDP per person increased by a much more modest 75 percent during the same period, and real GDP per capita rose 38 percent.

(Deliveli, 2013)

Yet what seems clear is that the Turkish economy has been prospering in recent years. Economic growth and Turkey’s long-standing position as one of the largest economies in the world (in 1993 it was 19th largest and in 2011 it was 18th largest), together with many recent reforms in legislation and public services should contribute to increasing subjective well-being and quality of life in Turkey.

However, despite positive growth indicators and the fact that informal jobs among 15–64 year-old workers visibly decreased, the informal economy continues to play a major role. When first measured in 2005, it covered 48% of Turkish workers (World Bank, 2013b). With less favourable working conditions, the risk of poverty and social exclusion of those working in Turkey is much higher. This was also addressed by Vladimír Špidla, former European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, in a speech at Ankara’s 2006 Conference, ‘Social dialogue as a tool to address the informal economy in Turkey’. There, he stressed the need for:

- a reduction of Turkey’s informal economy;
- the inclusion of the informal into the formal economy to improve the quality of jobs and social protection;
- both economic and social progress by combining competitiveness and social justice (access and inclusion for all);
- the use of social progress as a productive factor, with ‘spill-over effects’ from social to sustained economic success. Accordingly, one should promote social dialogue and trade union rights as a means to facilitate social and economic reforms;

- avoidance of social dumping and investment in higher social standards, better jobs, lifelong learning and more effective social protection to increase quality and productivity;
- strengthening women's rights and position in society, including education and formal labour market activity (Špidla, 2006).

In 2011, according to the World Bank (2013b), 42% of those of working age still hold informal jobs. The majority of these workers are in agriculture but a high proportion also occurs in non-agricultural sectors (28%). Women are affected disproportionately (58%). High levels of informal work can contribute to relatively low labour productivity; in 2010, the rate in Turkey was similar to that of Poland (40% of that in the US).

Nonetheless, trends in informal employment, as shown by data collected by the Turkish Household Labour Force Survey, are favourable. Data show that informal work decreased over time in both the agricultural sector and non-agricultural sectors:

Informal employment means that the worker is not officially registered. That is, neither they nor the employer pays any tax, including payroll tax and social security. The rates differ greatly when one accounts for the self-employed, for which registering for the social security is voluntary. The self-employed are most common in the agricultural sector therefore informality is highest there. Informal employment in Turkey among wage earners in the non-agricultural sector is only 20%. Informal employment rate for whole labour force is 39%. And there has been a steady improvement since 2004.

(Gürsel et al, 2013a).

Table 1: Total employment and informal employment rate (thousands), 2004–2012, Turkey

Category	2004		2007		2012	
	Total employment	Informal rate (%)	Total employment	Informal rate (%)	Total employment	Informal rate (%)
Wage earner	10,693	32.1	12,534	29.4	15,619	22.0
Agriculture	5,713	89.9	4,867	88.1	6,097	83.6
Non-agriculture	13,919	33.8	15,871	32.3	18,724	24.5
Wage earner (non-agriculture)	10,293	29.9	12,131	27.4	15,013	19.6
Total	19,632	50.1	20,738	45.4	24,821	39.0

Source: Household Labour Force Survey, BETAM calculations using micro data

Despite there still being a large proportion of the working population in informal labour, the Turkish economy – at least until recently – has generally been evaluated as in a robust state. According to the 2012 OECD assessment report, 'Turkey's economy rebounded vigorously following the global crisis', with an average growth of close to 9% in 2010–2011 (OECD, 2013d). It was judged as having dealt very well with the crisis by the World Bank:

Although economic growth was slowed by the onset of the global economic crisis in 2008, it has nonetheless remained resilient – making Turkey an example from which other countries in the region can learn. Labour markets have recovered fast after the crisis and both the seasonally-adjusted unemployment and employment rates have also improved on their pre-crisis levels.

(World Bank, 2013a)

Viewing the situation more critically, however, current economic concerns in Turkey are its foreign trade deficit and its (public and private) short-term loans. Consequently, the Turkish lira has recently lost considerably against the US dollar and the euro, particularly in the first quarter of 2014.

In 2012, employment was still low, though rising, for women (30.9%) and was more or less stable at 75% for men. Overall, employment in 2012 averaged at 52.8%, while the monthly unemployment rate was around 8% (Eurostat, 2014d). Youth employment recovered more slowly after the crisis as its negative impact on youth unemployment ‘led to some young people deciding to go back to school’ (World Bank, 2013b, p.40).

Despite competitive gains, external and domestic macroeconomic imbalances emerged (OECD, 2012) and the recent growth outlook is not so promising. In January 2014, Eurostat forecast GDP growth of only around 3.5% for 2013, while the OECD predicted growth of a little more than 5%. When global recovery picks up speed, inflation and the current account deficit are expected to remain ‘above comfort levels’. Tight fiscal and monetary policies are called for, as well as ‘structural reforms to accelerate formalisation ... Productivity gains remain crucial for strong and sustainable growth’ (OECD, 2013a). However, potential output and living standards are expected to rise by 25% by 2030 as a result of planned labour market and educational reforms, which have the aim, among others, of reducing the number of early school-leavers.

A recent World Bank report (2013b) on managing labour markets through the economic cycle discusses in detail the challenges and strengths of the Turkish labour market regarding the 2008 crisis and the future. It detects several structural factors behind Turkish labour market developments: growing urbanisation, an increasing working age population, agricultural shedding and a large stock of low-skilled workers. It also shows that wage employment – especially in the service sector – is on the rise and that despite slow tertiarisation of employment, agricultural employment remains important.

Why should there be close ties between Turkey and Europe? As a US congressional research paper recently put it, close ties between Turkey and the EU might benefit both partners:

Economic ties between the EU and Turkey, despite the current problems within the Eurozone, have expanded over the past several years with nearly half of Turkey’s exports flowing to Europe. Turkey’s strong and growing economy offers a large and important market for European goods and services and will continue to do so for a long time.

(Morelli, 2013, p.14)

Quality of life

In addition to these economic factors, the importance of quality of life and the investigation of its main drivers have been recognised to be of vital importance in the current national and EU debate on inclusive growth, reflected in Europe 2020, the EU’s growth strategy. Previous reports by Eurofound have already investigated various aspects of quality of life in Turkey. The Eurofound overview report for the first European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS 2003) (Eurofound, 2007), based on a multitude of local and international datasets, including the EQLS 2003, investigated Turkish life in context, the dynamics of population growth, social inclusion and exclusion, as well as participation in society and life satisfaction in Turkey. It pointed to the need for more investment in education for a growing young population and better health services (especially for mothers and infant children). It also highlighted the need to raise the income levels of those in the lowest two income quartiles, improve access to and the standard of state services, expand social security coverage and investigate the pension system and emigration flows into Europe.

This report also investigated women's participation in society. It showed strong differences in education and employment patterns, but nearly no gender differences in the evaluation of working conditions. Yet, despite the fact that working women were likely to be without children, women found it more difficult than men to balance the demands of working life with family responsibilities. Looking at participation in society and life satisfaction, the report highlighted a need for direct and indirect government intervention. With life satisfaction and trust in people below that of most EU Member States, and high corruption levels, the authors identified scope for a fairer and more effective delivery of existing policies and increased local government efforts to reduce crime, noise and air pollution and deliver clean water to houses. They recommended targeted policies to address the needs of minority groups and measures to reduce tension between rich and poor people (via taxation and public spending). The lowest satisfaction by domain was found for standard of living, an area where the government – by raising skills and employability via education, as well as wages – would be able to improve the situation.

A 2011 report on quality of life in the candidate countries provides the following summary of the situation in Turkey before the recent European economic crisis (Eurofound, 2011).

Economy: One-third of the population was faced with a precarious job situation (35%) and the deprivation rate for the youngest age cohort was high (69%).

Housing and local environment: Almost half (46%) could not afford to keep their home adequately warm if wanted. Multiple accommodation problems were more frequently reported by women, though no urban–rural difference occurred regarding shortage of space. Multiple environmental problems were reported by those who were not deprived, young people and women. There was a low availability of food stores in walking distance.

Health and health access: Health-related factors showed the biggest gender differences. Half (50%) of Turkish people reporting a chronic illness were also severely hampered in daily life. The report did not detect any age-related differences regarding access to health services.

Family life: Turkey displayed traditional family structures where single households and single parents reported lower satisfaction with family life. There was a strong family orientation in regard to contacts, expectations of support and social networks.

Perceived quality of society: Those in rural areas, those with only secondary education, women and older people all gave a higher rating to the quality of the educational system than others. The pension system was perceived to be of higher quality by rural residents but of lower quality by people with inadequate income. Trust in institutions was generally high, with even higher trust displayed by women, rural residents, those with a maximum of secondary education, religious people and older people.

Subjective well-being: Older people reported higher overall life satisfaction than middle-aged people. Retired people reported higher overall life satisfaction than those who were employed. The share of optimists within the rural population was found to be higher than within cities.

Eurofound's third and most recent report on Turkey is part of a series of quality of life reports in enlargement countries, based on the recently run third wave of the European Quality of Life Survey in 2011–2012 (Eurofound, 2013a). It compares Turkey with the EU in general and also shows trends over time since the first report was published. It provides the first insights into today's quality of life in Turkey, showing higher than EU average levels of optimism, satisfaction with health and use of public transport, as well as trust in government and local authorities. Yet it also shows that life satisfaction and happiness, mental well-being, satisfaction with standard of living and trust in people are still lower than

the EU average. Rates were higher than the EU average regarding difficulty in making ends meet, the number of items people cannot afford (deprivation), informal debts, work–life conflict, cost as a problem in seeing a doctor and tensions between rich and poor.

While Eurofound's report compares Turkey to the EU average regarding a range of topics, the latest OECD Better Life Index (2013c) compares Turkey to other OECD countries. The Better Life Index shows that Turkey has made considerable progress in improving the quality of life of its citizens over the last two decades, but confirms the EQLS findings: Turkey still ranks in a low position in relation to a large number of topics compared to most other countries in the Better Life Index.

- Turkish respondents are less satisfied with their current housing situation (67% compared to 87% on average in the OECD), average homes contain fewer rooms per person (0.9 compared to an OECD average of 1.6) and fewer private indoor toilets (87.3% compared to an OECD average: 97.8%).
- Household net adjusted disposable income in Turkey (about USD 13,044 a year) is around two-thirds of the OECD average, and financial wealth is also lower (about USD 10,524 a year) at around one-quarter of the OECD average.
- In Turkey, 36% of men have successfully completed upper secondary school compared to 26% of women, a rate much lower than on average in the OECD (74%). The gender gap is greater too.
- More than 48% of the working age population (15–64 years) have a paid job, as do 75% of those with a tertiary level of education and 46% of those with a level below upper secondary education. Although the system is quite inclusive, youth unemployment amounts to 18.6% (compared to the OECD average of 16.2%).
- Expected community support is lower (73%) than on average in the OECD (90%). Gender has little impact, but higher education levels increase the rate. Nevertheless, fewer people (34%) than on average in the OECD (48%) reported helping a stranger in the last month.
- Urban air pollution and access to clean water have become an issue in Turkey.
- In Turkey, 57% of those registered say they trust their political institutions. Voter turnout (88%) is higher than on average in the OECD (72%).
- While 67% reported being in good health in Turkey (OECD: 69%), women, older people, the unemployed and those with a lower education level or lower income reported poorer health.
- Life satisfaction (on a scale of 0–10) was lower in Turkey (5.3) than in the OECD (6.6).
- Still influenced by traditional gender roles, three-quarters of domestic work is carried out by women. Long working hours (46% work more than 50 hours per week compared to a 9% OECD average) impact negatively on work–life balance (OECD, 2013c).

As this summary shows, Turkey is in some ways similar to the EU28, and in some ways very different to it. This might be due to its size and often large social and economic disparities. It will be interesting to see how quality of life developed from 2003 to 2012, and how development patterns in Turkey conform to or diverge from those of the EU28. Rural–urban differences are expected to be quite important, with more traditional, less developed areas found in large rural areas, contrasting with highly developed, modern cities with a cultural mix of inhabitants. It is also expected that recent economic and social initiatives, promoted not least by EU accession requirements, and the general modernisation of lifestyles, have impacted on the perceived quality of life for individuals, most likely in quite different ways for different population groups.

The following fact sheet provides a summary of the above-mentioned demographic, economic and societal developments in Turkey, as well as a first glimpse of the EQLS trend analysis.

Table 2: Country fact sheet, Turkey 2003–2012 and EU28 2012

	2003	2007	2012	Change 2007–2012	EU28 2012
Basic facts and macro economy					
Total area (in square km)	783,562	783,562	783,562		4,493,712
Population on 1 January	66,440,500	69,805,000	74,724,269	7%	504,630,988
Gross domestic product (current prices, € million)	268,331	471,972	611,967	29.7%	12,967,811
Real GDP growth rate, yearly (%)	5.3	4.7	2.2	3.3	-0.4
GDP per capita (current prices, €)	4,013	6,722	8,470	20.6%	25,461
GDP per capita (constant TRY, index)	114	144	157	9%	
Inflation rate (%)	25.3	8.8	9	2.4	2.6
General government consolidated gross debt, relative to GDP (%)	67.7	39.9	n.a.		85.1
Population					
Share of population 0–14 years * (%)	29.3	28.3	25.3	-3	15.6
Share of population 65+ years * (%)	5.6	5.9	7.3	1.4	17.8
Old age dependency ratio *	8.5	9	10.9	1.9	26.7
Total dependency ratio *	53.5	52	48.4	-3.6	50.1
Health					
Life expectancy at birth, men	n.a.	n.a.	74.8		77.4
Life expectancy at birth, women	n.a.	n.a.	80.5		83.2
Labour market					
Employment rate, total (15–64 years, %)	n.a.	44.6	48.9	4.3	64.1
Employment male (15–64 years)	n.a.	66.8	69.2	2.4	69.6
Employment female (15–64 years)	n.a.	22.8	28.7	5.9	58.5
Employment rate, total (20–64 years, %)	n.a.	48.2	52.8	4.6	68.4
Employment male (20–64 years)	n.a.	73	75	2	74.5
Employment female (20–64 years)	n.a.	24.2	30.9	6.7	62.3
Unemployment rate, total (%)	n.a.	8.8	8.1	-0.7	10.5
Unemployment rate male	n.a.	8.7	7.6	-1.1	10.4
Unemployment rate female	n.a.	9.1	9.4	0.3	10.6
Education					
Early school-leavers male (%)	n.a.	39	36.1	-2.9	14.4
Early school-leavers female (%)	n.a.	54.1	43	-11.1	10.9
NEET rate (15–24 years, %), male	n.a.	23.7	17.5	-6.2	12.9
NEET rate (15–24 years, %), female	n.a.	54.0	39.7	-14.3	13.4
Social					
Infant mortality (per 1,000 live births)	24	17	12	-5	3.9**
Poverty headcount nation (%)	28.1	17.8	n.a.		(24.8%)
Poverty headcount urban (%)	22.3	10.4	8.9 [°]		n.a.
Gini coefficient	43.4	39.3	40.0 [°]		(30.6%)
Urbanisation (urban population, %)	66.0	68.3	72.0	3.7	(41%)

Notes: * 2006; n.a. = data not available. ** EU27, 2011, ° 2010, °° 2009, Eurostat, TR =WB; changes in percentage points unless otherwise indicated.

Source: Eurostat (extraction December 2013, March 2014); Eurostat 2013a; World Bank Data Base (World Bank, 2014), own calculations

Table 3: Trends in quality of life in Turkey based on EQLS, 2003–2012

	2003	2007	2012
Life satisfaction (scale 1–10)	5.6	6.2	6.6
Happiness (scale 1–10)	6.5	6.6	6.9
Optimism about future (% ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’)	*	52%	59%
Satisfaction with health (scale 1–10)	7.2	7.0	7.5
Mental well-being (scale 1–100)	*	47	56
Satisfaction with standard of living (scale 1–10)	4.6	5.1	5.9
Difficulty making ends meet (% ‘difficult’ or ‘very difficult’)	48%	40%	22%
Number of items people cannot afford (scale 1–6)	3.0	3.4	2.9
Informal debts (% in arrears over last 12 months)	*	*	21%
Work–life conflict (on any dimension, % employed women)	85%	71%	81%
Work–life conflict (on any dimension, % employed men)	64%	67%	75%
Doing household tasks at least several days a week, difference between women and men (% points)	*	63	72
Women, economically inactive, willing to work (%)	*	*	56%
Cost as a problem to see a doctor (% very difficult)	32%	13%	17%
Household with children <12 years using childcare services (%)	*	*	7%
Proportion using public transport (%)	*	*	97%
Trust in people (scale 1–10)	4.5	4.9	4.9
Trust in government (scale 1–10)	*	6.7	6.3
Trust in local authorities (scale 1–10)	*	*	5.8
Tension between different racial or ethnic groups (% perceiving ‘a lot of tension’)	47%	31%	40%
Tension between poor people and rich people (% perceiving ‘a lot of tension’)	61%	35%	42%
Index of perceived social exclusion (scale 1–5)	*	2.4	2.4
Participation in voluntary work (%)	0%	0%	20%
Civic and political involvement (%)	7%	3%	8%

Notes: * not available.

Source: EQLS 2003, EQLS 2007, EQLS 2012 – own calculations.

Progress towards convergence with the EU 2

This chapter compares developments in quality of life in Turkey with those in the EU. Developments in the EU are measured against the Europe 2020 targets, aimed at smart, inclusive and sustainable growth. Although less prominent than in the past, the ideas of social cohesion and social inclusion still play a strong part in European policymaking. Policy development related to social cohesion involves addressing inequality between countries and regions. Social inclusion policy aims to enable unemployed people and ethnic and racial groups, such as the Roma community, to benefit from smart and sustainable growth. Europe 2020 has a series of targets related to the following concerns: employment levels, gender equality, expenditure on research and development, greenhouse gas emissions, the proportion of early school-leavers, the proportion of people aged 30 to 40 years with a third-level education and reducing the number of people at risk of poverty.

This chapter examines the situation of Turkey regarding quality of life when compared with the EU28 average, highlighting also the top and bottom performers in the EU. It also reflects on how Turkey's position has changed over the last 10 years, showing that some changes were linked to meeting EU accession requirements, while others were driven by Turkey's strong economic performance and important social developments. The chapter focuses on the following themes: subjective well-being and happiness, satisfaction with one's own situation, quality of public services and social exclusion.

EU accession process

In August 2013, a report on EU enlargement for the US Congress by the Congressional Research Service noted:

Relations between Turkey and the European Union have vacillated between support for and doubt over future membership on both sides, but not over the need for close relations. There is little doubt among most observers that over its first eight years, the EU accession process has been a major motivation behind Turkey's internal march toward reform and democratization. It has also been a factor in helping transform Turkey's economy and its political and military institutions, leadership, and political culture, both at the national and, in some respects, the local government level. And, it has helped forge a closer relationship between Europe and Turkey.

(Morelli, 2013, p. 13f)

However, opinions on whether Turkey should or should not become a full member of the EU seem to be ambivalent in both Turkey and European countries. Despite the fact that Turkey is seen as an important economic partner, regional force and neighbour, there is a lot of scepticism about EU enlargement to include Turkey. In Turkey, many no longer 'believe that it is necessary for Turkey to become a member of the EU in order to define Turkey or its place in the international community' (Morelli, 2013, p. 13f).

As public opinion polls on Turkish sentiments towards EU membership show, support has recently decreased dramatically: in 2004, according to Eurobarometer surveys, 71% said EU membership would be a good thing for Turkey, but this fell to 55% in 2005 (ABGS, 2005). A public opinion poll conducted by Kadir Has University in Istanbul in 2012 found that less than half (47.5%) supported Turkey's full membership of the EU (KHAS, 2012). By contrast, a poll commissioned by EDAM (a policy think tank) and conducted by TNS in 2012–2013 found that only 33% agreed that 'Turkey should insist on full membership of the EU' (EDAM, 2013).

Nevertheless, for the time being, Turkish politicians still seem interested in proceeding with the EU accession process and attaining Europe 2020 targets. Five headline targets have been agreed to measure progress in EU Member States: employment; research and development; climate change and energy; education; and poverty and social inclusion (European Commission, 2011a). Table 4 below shows that Turkey's performance regarding these Europe 2020 targets improved significantly over the last 10 years.

Table 4: Progress in attaining EU2020 targets in 2012

Target by 2020	Target	Turkey 2003	Turkey 2012	EU28 2012
Employment of 20–64 year-olds	75%	48.2% [°]	52.8%	68.4%
Gender equity on labour market:				
<i>Employment rate for men</i>		73.2% [°]	75%	74.5%
<i>Employment rate for women</i>		24.0% [°]	30.9%	62.3%
Research and development (public and private) as share of GDP	3%	0.48%	0.86%*	2.06%
Greenhouse gas emission, index 100 (1990)	-20%	161.87	197.64**	83.07 *
Energy from renewables in gross final consumption	20%	-	-	13.0*
Early school leavers	<10%	48.8% [°]	39.6%	12.7%
Proportion of 30–40 year-olds with tertiary educational degree	40%	11.9% [°]	18.0%	35.7%
People at risk of poverty or social exclusion (millions)	-20	48.934 (72.4%) ^{°°}	-	124.447 (24.8%)

Notes: * 2011, ** 2009, ° 2006, °° % for 2006

Sources: European Commission (2011a), Eurostat (2014a), Eurostat database (2014d)

Subjective well-being

Subjective well-being, which reflects an individuals' overall perception of quality of life, can help us to understand the impact of social development on the population. Yet, although one would expect overall subjective well-being to be higher in times of economic and social prosperity and lower in times of economic stagnation or crisis, this is not always the case. While some leading economists think that subjective well-being is not directly related to economic growth, such as Easterlin (1974) and Layard (2011), other commentators such as Veenhoven and Hagerty (2003) think that the two phenomena are related. EQLS data show that despite the economic recession, life satisfaction in Europe did not change much between 2007 and 2011. In Turkey, the economy has been doing quite well over the last 10 years, public services have greatly improved and the country managed to survive the 2007–2008 economic crisis quite well. Subjective well-being should therefore have increased, and so it did.

In terms of indicators, research differentiates between life satisfaction and other indicators of well-being, such as happiness. While life satisfaction refers more to a cognitive state, happiness is seen as more of an affective state (McKennel and Andrews, 1980, cited by Eurofound, 2003, p. 14). Research has shown that there is a difference between both indicators, reflecting 'the different nature of the indicators with happiness being more emotionally driven and less determined by the standard of living, while the satisfaction indicator is more strongly influenced by socioeconomic circumstances' (Eurofound, 2009, p. 16). Taken together with other indicators explored in this report, subjective well-being as measured by happiness and life satisfaction can be a useful indicator of the overall quality of society (Abbott and Wallace, 2012).

Overall life satisfaction

From 2003 to 2012, overall life satisfaction converged in Europe, while remaining stable at the EU28 average level. This is shown in Figure 1, a cone showing changes in quality of life over time (for further information on cones, see the definition in the methodology section in Chapter 1). It was highest (if slightly decreasing) in Denmark and lowest but growing in Bulgaria. In general, countries with lower levels of overall life satisfaction have seen improvement, while countries at higher levels have remained more or less stable. The inner cone (quantile range) became smaller, again pointing to increasing EU convergence from 2003 to 2012.

Turkey, represented by the blue line, shows a strong increase in overall life satisfaction from 2003 to 2012, going from 5.6 to 6.6 on a 10-point scale. While ranking within the lowest EU28 countries in 2003 and 2007, there is visible progress from 2007 to 2012, when Turkey reaches the 25% quantile marker. Turkey, whose average life satisfaction in the last 10

years was already above that of some EU countries, has thus come much closer to the EU28 average, and thereby closer to a Europe whose differences in life satisfaction have clearly become smaller too.

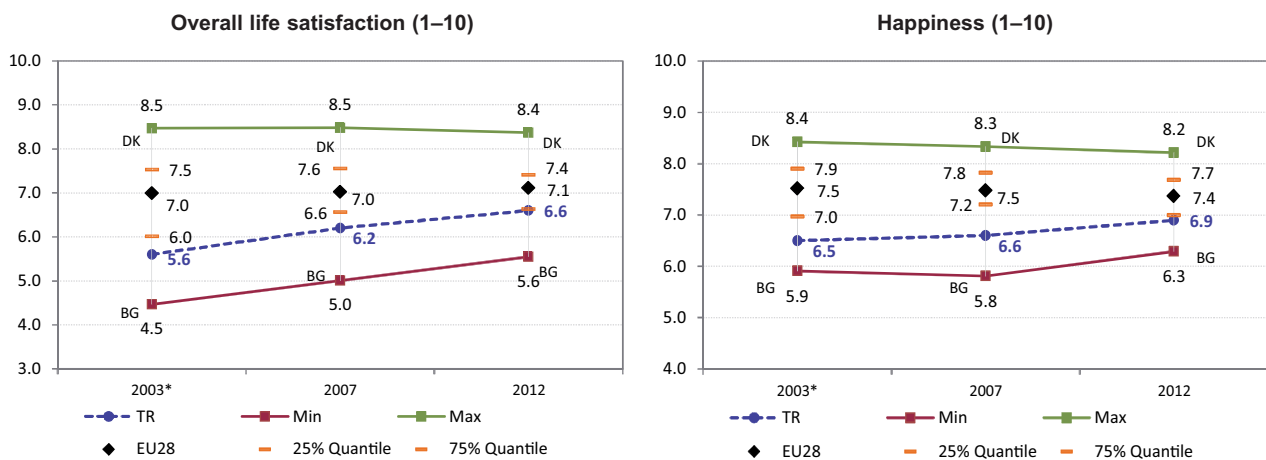
Happiness

Happiness is generally a little higher than overall life satisfaction in Turkey. This is also the case for EU28 countries from 2003 to 2012 (Figure 1), which shows that the range of country-specific values is smaller than it is for life satisfaction. Differences in happiness between EU countries are somewhat smaller than differences in life satisfaction. Up to 2007, convergence regarding happiness seems to have been partly offset during and after the crisis, when there was a slightly larger range.

As in overall life satisfaction, Turkey's happiness rating improved during the observed period. While it was below the 25% quantile marker for the EU28 in 2003 (at 6.5) and 2007 (at 6.6), in 2012 Turkey nearly reached the marker (or inner cone). In recent years, Turkey has thus grown closer to the EU28 average regarding happiness ratings, in a Europe that has seen convergence regarding happiness levels across countries.

Interestingly, happiness – both the EU28 average and in Turkey – is related to neither gender nor age. In Turkey, people in urban areas seem to be slightly happier than those in rural areas; differences decreased from 2003 to 2007, before widening slightly again.

Figure 1: Trends in life satisfaction and happiness, 2003–2012



Notes: EU28 average based on population, inner cone (orange markers, 25%–75%), upper (max) and lower (min) EU28 bounds, Turkey (blue line).

Q30: All things considered, how satisfied would you say you are with your life these days? Scale ranged from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 10 (very satisfied). Q41: Taking all things together on a scale of 1 to 10, how happy would you say you are? Scale ranged from 1 (very unhappy) to 10 (very happy).

Sources: *EQLS 2003*, *EQLS 2007*, *EQLS 2012*

Satisfaction with one's own situation

When asked about satisfaction with their own situation in terms of education, standard of living, accommodation and health, respondents in Turkey showed some significant differences to the EU28 average.

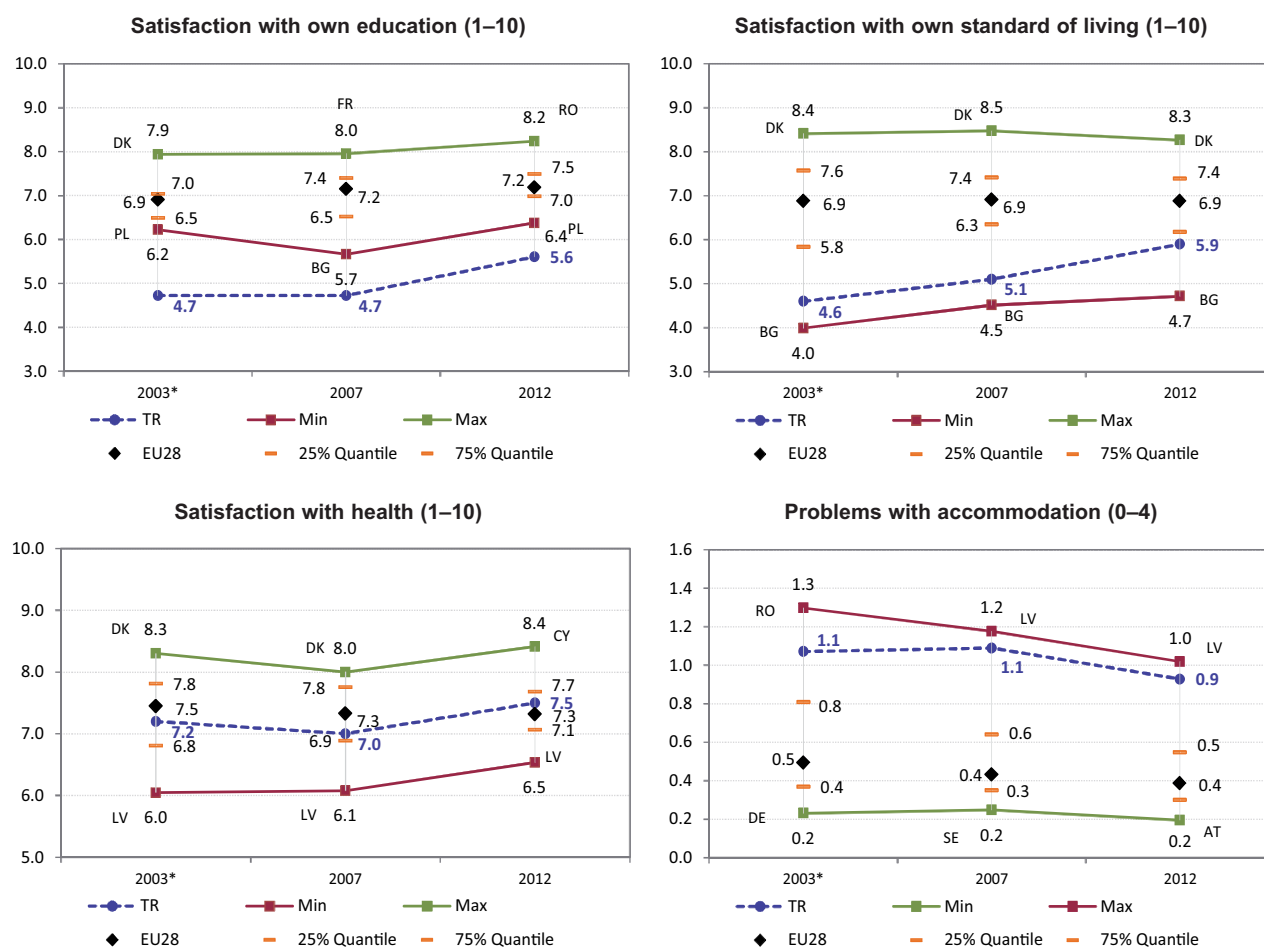
Satisfaction with standard of living in Turkey improved markedly while the EU28 average remained more or less constant (with countries showing increasing convergence). Satisfaction with standard of living in Turkey rose from 4.6 in 2003 to 5.1 in 2007 and 5.9 in 2012. Although it is still below the EU28 average, in 2012 Turkey's score came close to surpassing the lowest scoring EU countries.

Although still clearly below the EU28 average, Turkey's gains in satisfaction with the respondent's own level of education slightly decreased the gap between Turkey and the EU28 in this respect. The EU28 average for satisfaction with one's own level of education increased slightly from 2003 to 2012. In Turkey, the education system was radically changed, which led to intense debate, not least regarding the country's consistently unsatisfactory performance on the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). No obvious changes occurred between 2003 to 2007 regarding satisfaction with own education; however, satisfaction increased between 2007 and 2012, attaining 5.6 on a 10-point scale in that year.

From 2003 to 2012, satisfaction with health in Turkey remained close to the EU28 average while rates across EU countries converged regarding perception of health. Similar to EU developments, in Turkey this rate slightly declined from 2003 to 2007 but rose again afterwards. With a score of 7.5 on a 10-point scale, Turkish satisfaction with health in 2012 was higher than the EU28 average (7.3). This is explained by the much larger share of young people (who generally have a higher satisfaction level with health) in the country.

Problems with quality of accommodation (such as shortage of space, rot in windows, doors and floors, damp or leaks in walls or roof, or lack of an indoor flushing toilet) were more numerous in Turkey than the EU28 average in 2003, 2007 and 2012. However, both the average number of problems reported and the proportion of people reporting such problems in Turkey declined, while corresponding EU28 average figures remained more or less the same (see Figure 11).

Figure 2: Trends in satisfaction with personal situation, 2003–2012



Notes: Q40: Could you please tell me on a scale of 1 to 10 how satisfied you are with each of the following items, where 1 means you are very dissatisfied and 10 means you are very satisfied? Q19: Do you have any of the following problems with your accommodation? (a. shortage of space, b. rot in windows, doors or floors, c. damp or leaks in walls or roof, d. lack of indoor flushing toilet).

Sources: EQLS 2003, EQLS 2007, EQLS, 2012.

Quality of public services

According to the latest Communication of the European Commission on social investment for growth and cohesion, Member States are urged to place greater focus on public services such as ‘(child)care, education, training, active labour market policies, housing support, rehabilitation and health services’ (European Commission, 2013g, p. 9). Social investment should ‘prepare people to confront life’s risks’ (p. 3). The Communication calls for early intervention and the enabling of access to basic services such as (among others) childcare, education and health (European Commission, 2013g, p. 10).

When investigating trends in satisfaction with public services (such as the education system, health services, the transport system and pensions) over the last 10 years, it quickly becomes clear that Turkey managed to greatly improve its position relative to EU28 countries. While the EU average for many public services remained more or less constant, satisfaction with quality of services in Turkey rose from levels similar to the lower EU Member States to being close to the EU28 average. In 2012, it even exceeded the EU28 average.

It can thus be assumed that Turkey’s policy initiatives and service changes regarding the provision of public services – many driven by the wish to bring standards closer to the EU – have resulted in a much higher (perceived) quality of services than before, leading to higher satisfaction with those services. For example, in 2012, some 97% of the population used public transport. It is not surprising that satisfaction with the quality of transport services was high and increased throughout the last 10 years. Although it could be concluded that frequently used services (such as public transport) might generally be evaluated better, the substantial increase in satisfaction levels from 2003 to 2012 is a strong indication of improvements being made in the service. Nevertheless, there is always room for improvement. Istanbul municipality’s official statistics indicate that almost one-third (31.65%) of the daily trips in Istanbul are accounted for by private cars or taxis while only 14.3% of daily trips are done using rail systems. Buses cover large parts of the network too (IETT, 2014).

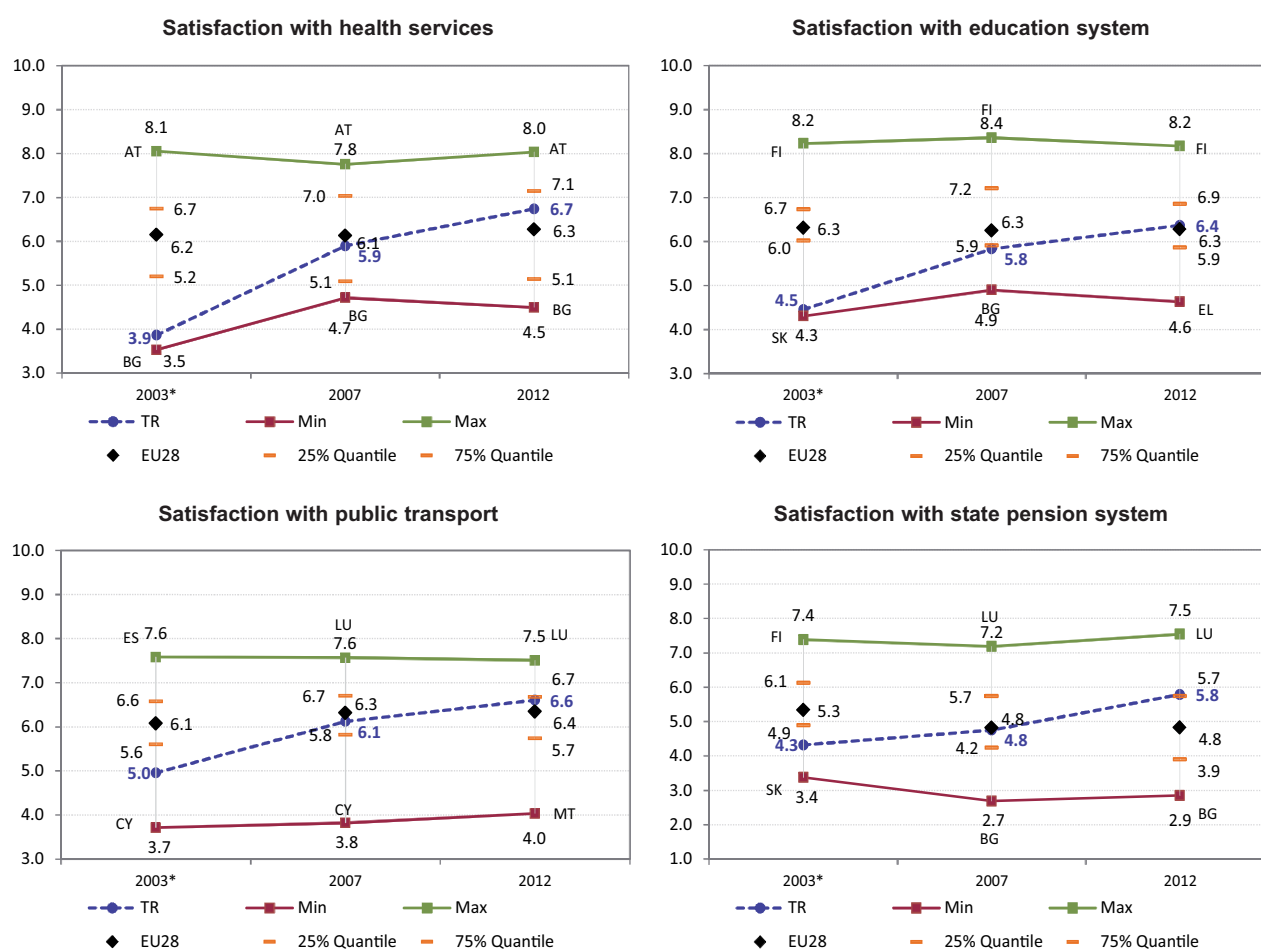
In 2003, policies concerning education, health, state pensions and social services were rated poorly by a majority of the Turkish population, much lower than the EU average. This was already shown by Eurofound (2007), who, in its evaluation of national policies in the 2003 quality of life report on Turkey, pointed out that such negative perceptions indicate that citizens do not consider their needs are being met by actions of government. However, ‘subjective evaluation that citizens make of public policies is important in a democracy’ and ‘can also direct policymakers towards areas of public policy in which greater effort may be required’ (Eurofound, 2007, p.35).

In the last 10 years, satisfaction with the quality of the state pension system in Turkey increased greatly. On a 1–10 scale, ratings improved by 1.5 points between 2003 and 2012. During the same period, the EU average satisfaction level with the quality of state pensions decreased and the EU28 quartile range – covering 50% of countries whose average is closest to the EU28 average – expanded and moved downwards, indicating a decrease in satisfaction levels.

Similarly, satisfaction with quality of health services in Turkey rose considerably between 2003 and 2012, at a time when satisfaction with these services at EU28 level varied only slightly, remaining at more or less the same level. Starting out from a comparatively low level at the lower bound of EU28 countries, Turkey improved its position to just below the EU28 average in 2007 and noticeably higher than the EU28 average in 2012.

During the 10-year period, the data show a clear and significant increase in satisfaction with the education system in Turkey. While respondents in 2003 evaluated the quality of the Turkish education system at only 4.5 on a scale of 1 to 10, perceived quality increased over time, reaching 6.4 in 2012. During the same period, satisfaction with the quality of education systems at the EU28 average remained the same, allowing Turkey to rise from levels at the lower EU28 bound to just above its average.

Figure 3: Trends in satisfaction with quality of public services, Turkey and EU28 (1–10)



Notes: Q53: In general, how would you rate the quality of each of the following public services in [country]? Scale ranged from 1 (very poor quality) to 10 (very high quality).
Sources: EQLS 2003; 2007; 2012.

Access to services and economic well-being

Access to services, especially healthcare, and being able to make ends meet are important factors contributing to individual well-being, as is the ability to afford what others have. Turkey improved in many related fields.

The cost of seeing a doctor can limit access to healthcare. The EU28 average figures for cost-related problems slightly decreased from 2003 to 2007 but remained unchanged afterwards. A similar trend was observed for the quartile range, indicating increasing cohesion within the EU from 2003 to 2007. In Turkey, cost-related access to healthcare became much less of a problem from 2003 to 2007, when the introduction of extensive healthcare coverage and the provision of more local services reduced cost-related barriers to access. Nonetheless, the unexpectedly high cost of the new health initiatives made some cutbacks necessary. Despite this setback, Turkey managed to improve access: while still falling close to the EU's worst performers in 2003, Turkey fell within the quartile range in 2007 and was just a little above it in 2012.

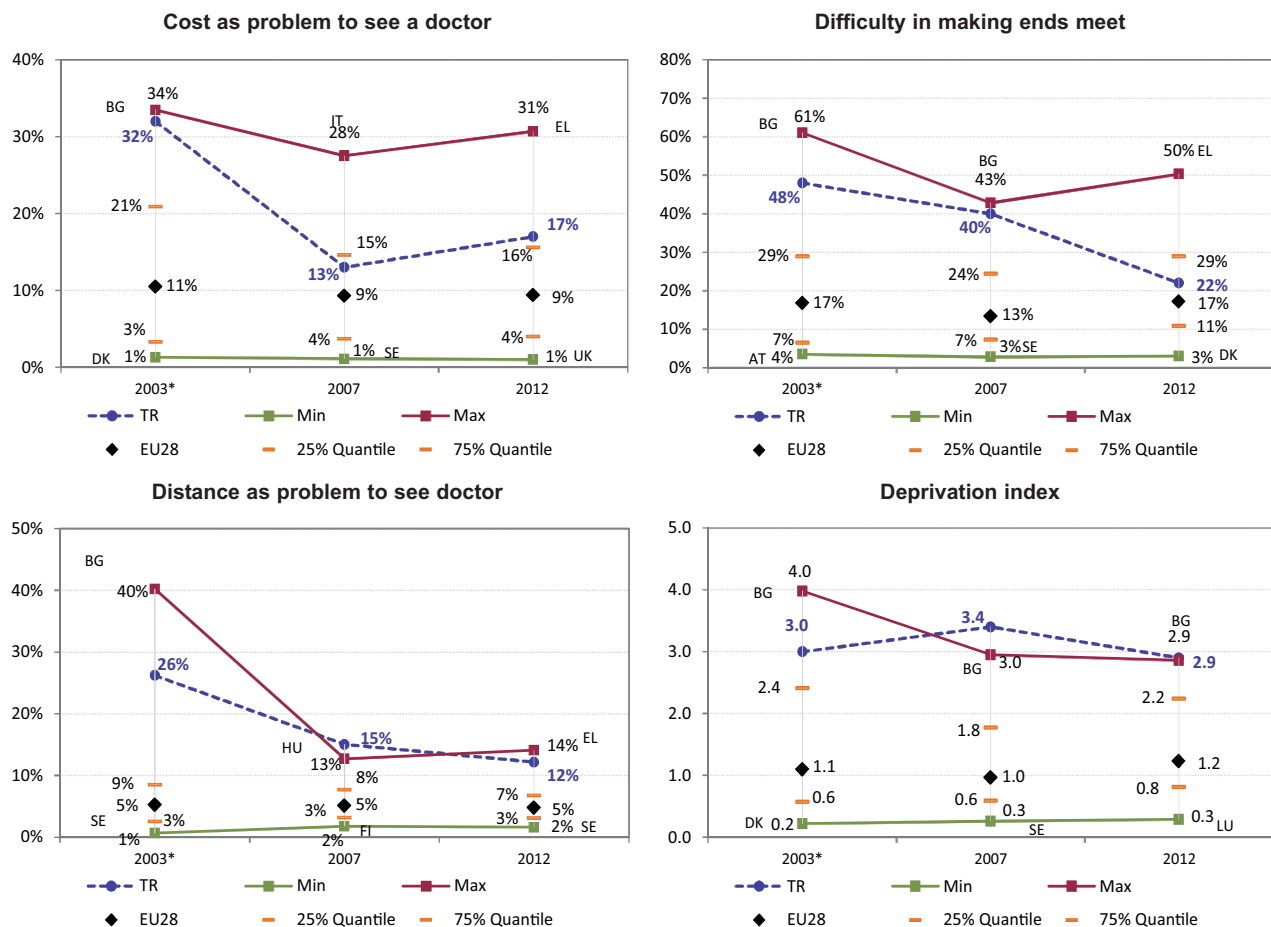
This development may be partly explained by the so-called green card programme, which provides health insurance coverage to low-income families not covered by social security. Benefits for green card holders were increased in 2008 by the Universal Health Insurance Law to match those of people contributing to the health coverage system. In January 2012, the programme was merged with the contributory health insurance programme to form a single general health insurance system (World Bank, 2013b).

The extent to which distance posed a problem in seeing a doctor was much greater in Turkey than the EU28 average throughout the whole period. However, the share of those reporting that distance to healthcare services made it very difficult to see a doctor more than halved, from 26% in 2003 to 12% in 2012. This highlights Turkey's progress towards good healthcare coverage and reflects approval of measures taken to attain such coverage: the green card programme, the general practitioner system as first referral point, and making what were previously private facilities available to everyone.

The share of EU28 households experiencing difficulty or great difficulty in making ends meet decreased between 2003 and 2007 before rising again to the 2003 level (17%). At the same time, Turkey saw a constant reduction in the proportion of households perceiving such difficulties. Problems fell from 2003 to 2007, and again, even more substantially, from 2007 to 2012. Although starting at a rather high level of 48% in 2003, the percentage of those with great difficulties in making ends meet was more than halved (22%) in 2012. Turkish people not only seem to be relatively unaffected by the economic crisis; they also seem to have experienced improvements in terms of income and wealth.

Deprivation in Turkey continues to be much higher than the EU28 average. In 2012, deprivation in Turkey was as high as in Bulgaria, which throughout the period was the worst-performing country within the EU28. Measuring the number of items people cannot afford on a scale of 0–6 (0 meaning can afford all items and 6 meaning cannot afford any of the items), deprivation remained quite stable at the EU28 average (see list of items on P. 40). In Turkey however, the pattern was different. While deprivation increased from 2003 to 2007, it decreased from 2007 to 2012. Things got better in Turkey at a time when in most of Europe they were getting worse. From 2003 to 2012, countries experienced growing cohesion in material well-being, although the economic crisis in 2008 seems to have slowed down this development.

Figure 4: Trends in access to services and economic well-being, Turkey and EU28



Notes: Q47: On the last occasion you needed to see a doctor or medical specialist, to what extent did each of the following factors make it difficult or not for you to do so? Q59: There are some things that many people cannot afford, even if they would like them. For each of the following things on this card, can I just check whether your household can afford it if you want it? Q58: A household may have different sources of income and more than one household member may contribute to it. Thinking of your household's total monthly income: is your household able to make ends meet....? Scale ranged from 1 (very easily) to 6 (with great difficulty). Sources: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

Summary and policy pointers

The standard of living in Turkey increased from 2003 to 2012, a fact clearly mirrored in the increased satisfaction reported by the population. Even if still below the EU28 average, recent improvements are clearly visible.

Similarly, overall life satisfaction and happiness increased. Although still somewhat lower than the EU28 average, Turkey now falls closer to it.

Satisfaction with own education, own standard of living and health increased while problems perceived with own accommodation slightly declined. Education – especially that of girls and in rural areas – remains an issue that needs to be addressed. While satisfaction with health in 2012 exceeds the EU28 average, problems with accommodation also require further attention.

As a result of recent improvements in public services, satisfaction levels with health services, the education system, the state pension system and public transport were much higher than before. In 2012, Turkey's average satisfaction levels with these services surpassed the EU28 average in all categories. This seems to reflect both satisfaction with recent improvements as well as the government. Nevertheless, there is still room for further improvements in all fields.

Economic well-being has improved. The proportion of Turkish people reporting difficulty in making ends meet halved between 2003 and 2012. Even if this rate is still above the EU28 average, it still reflects a remarkable improvement.

Access to healthcare services has also greatly improved. The extent to which distance from a doctor posed a barrier to healthcare services halved between 2003 and 2012. This is probably a result of a new general practitioner 'first point of contact' system. Cost is also a barrier to healthcare; the analysis of this provides mixed messages. Nonetheless, both areas need further attention since perceptions of both problems were higher than the EU28 average in 2012.

Turkey seems to have been improving substantially on most quality of life and economic indicators and it scores higher than some European countries on most of them. This is a result of Turkey's rapid modernisation as well as many initiatives taken in the last 10 years. However, these improvements came from a low base and these areas therefore need further attention.

Improvements in public services and well-being 3

This chapter focuses on differences in perceptions across different socioeconomic groups. It looks at how the process of modernisation in Turkey has affected quality of life, highlighting which groups have gained the most and which have lost the most. Gender, location (urban/rural area), age, income and educational attainment have been identified as the most relevant categories, since these seem to be the crucial factors in observed differences. Occasionally, other socioeconomic categories, such as employment and health status, are added. (Gender perspectives are also explored in the next chapter.)

Public services expenditure

As shown in the previous chapter, Turkey greatly improved its position relative to other EU28 countries between 2003 and 2012. While the EU average for many public services remained more or less constant, satisfaction with quality of services in Turkey rose from levels close to the lower-scoring EU28 countries in 2003, to levels almost at the EU28 average in 2007, to levels above the EU28 average in 2012.

Accordingly, public sector service expenditure in Turkey increased from 2003 to 2012, amounting to 22% of GDP in 2012. While expenditure on health as a percentage of GDP remained stable throughout the observed period, the number of workers in the sector increased substantially. Expenditure on state pensions, education and housing increased.

Table 5: *Public services expenditure and number of workers, Turkey, 2003–2012*

	2003	2007	2012
In TRY (million)			
Public sector services*	82,721	155,315	313,471
State pension**	25,174	52,311	105,293
Health***	17,462	34,530	58,640
Education†	10,180	21,355	39,169
Housing•		11,084	29,376
GDP (Nominal, for below calculation)	454,781	843,178	1,416,798
Workers ('000s)			
Public sector services*	2,187	2,114	2,488
Health ****	282.4	387.6	488.8
Education ‡		614.3	772.2
Expenditure as a percentage of GDP (%)			
Public sector services (expenditure)*	18%	18%	22%
State pension (expenditure)**	6%	6%	7%
Health (expenditure)***	4%	4%	4%
Education (expenditure)†	2%	3%	3%
Housing (expenditure)•		1%	2%

Source: *Turkish statistical data* - *TDM (Turkish Data Manager), **SGK (Social Security Institution), Annual Statistics Financial Tables, ***TUIK (Turkish Statistical Institute), Health Statistics, ****Ministry of Health 2011 and 2012 Health statistics yearbooks, †MEB (Ministry of National Education) 2014 Budget Presentation at TCMB (Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey) General Meeting, ‡TUIK (Turkish Statistical Institute), Education Statistics, Formal & Non-Formal Education, •TCMB (Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey), Central Administration Budget Expenditures-New Definition, (Property Purchasing and Expropriation + Property Capital and Production Expenditures + Property Reparation Expenditures).

State pension system

Turkish retirement regulations introduced in the 1990s allowed women to retire after only 15 years of employment and men to retire after 20 years of employment. As a result, it became possible to retire quite early, in some cases at only 35–40 years of age. However, life expectancy in Turkey increased to nearly 70 years and fiscal deficit, which increased due to pension payments, steadily grew. When granting financial aid to Turkey in the late 1990s, the International Monetary Fund thus requested not only structural but also pension reforms, which were put into practice in 1999 with the aim of deferring retirement age (Gürsel et al, 2013c).

This pension reform seems to have taken effect gradually, with the share of younger retirees declining and women in general retiring later than previously. However, the overall number of retirees in Turkey is still rapidly growing, driven by a continuous increase in the share of retirees over 50 years. From 2006 to 2010, as reported by a research brief based on TUIK data from autumn 2013, the proportion of retirees between 35 and 49 years declined from 7.1% to 5.5% (or 941,000 to 802,000), while the overall number of retired people above 35 years increased from 5.8 million to 7.1 million (Gürsel et al, 2013c).

Retirement ratios

Eurostat data for 2011 show lower retirement ratios for people over 65 years in Turkey (35.2%) than in Europe (86%). While a large part of this difference is explained by lower female labour force participation and thus non-entitlement to benefits, the share of men receiving benefits is smaller too. This is caused by a greater incidence of self-employment and informal employment, but also by the fact that many much younger men already receive pensions (Gürsel et al, 2013c).

Table 6: Retirement ratios in Turkey and Europe, 2011 (%)

	40–64 years			65 years and over		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Turkey	25.6	72.5	8.7	35.2	75.1	8.9
EU27	40.5	51.4	34.3	86.0	93.4	79.9

Notes: Retirement ratio is the share of retired people in a certain age group.

Source: Eurostat 2011, in Gürsel et al, 2013c.

Note that retirement does not automatically mean the end of working life. A large share of those receiving pension benefits continue to work. Findings based on the 2010 Income and Living Conditions Survey (SILC) show that in Turkey 34.6% of retired men and 7.5% retired women continue to work.

In other words, two out of seven million people entitled to pension payments are still working. In addition, informal employment is substantially more prevalent among working retirees. Most working retired men are either self-employed or working in a family business. A large share of retired women earn an income from working. By contrast, the employment rate for retired men younger than 55 years old is almost 50 percent.

(Gürsel et al, 2013b, p.1).

Satisfaction with pension system

The EQLS data show, in the last 10 years, a steadily increasing satisfaction with the quality of the state pension system in Turkey (Figure 3). Throughout the period, satisfaction in Turkey was higher for women, the rural population, older age groups and those with lower education. Partly related to differences in cost of living, another explanation might be better coverage through increased formal employment. With no significant improvements in pension salaries, reported satisfaction might also reflect general satisfaction with the AKP government and improvements in access to health services.

Box 1: Reading split analysis charts

Split analysis (as shown in the following charts) investigates the development of indicators for different socioeconomic groups within Turkey, looking into: gender (male–female); age (young people, middle aged people and older people);³ living area (rural–urban); education (highest level of education: primary, secondary or tertiary); and income differences (by comparing the lowest and highest income quartiles). In the ‘gap chart’ (in the lower-right corner), these groups are represented by different colours, with transparent bars not significant at 5% level (but kept to show developments over time).

Dotted lines represent Turkey and straight lines show the EU28 average. Besides trends over time and socioeconomic differences, the chart thus also allow for comparisons between the EU and Turkey. For example, the first chart is for gender. It shows that while satisfaction with the quality of the state pension system declined in Europe, it rose in Turkey, with women in Turkey always more satisfied than men. The ‘gap chart’ (in the lower-right corner) shows how differences between social groups increased or decreased. For instance, the first three bars in the gap chart show the development (falling trend) of gender differences: by 2012, they were smaller than they were in 2003.

Satisfaction with the state pension system in Turkey increased for both men and women, more sharply after 2007. Women show higher satisfaction than men. In 2012, Turkish women and men reported much higher satisfaction than the EU28 average.

Satisfaction increased both for the rural and urban population, more sharply for those in rural areas after 2007. Over time, the gap in satisfaction between rural and urban dwellers increased. This finding seems to relate to differences in purchasing power in various regions in Turkey, with larger cities usually more expensive in terms of consumption expenditure than rural areas (TUIK, 2012).

Satisfaction increased across all age groups, with the oldest (65 years and over) showing the highest increases in satisfaction after 2007. Gains in satisfaction for middle-aged respondents (35–49 years), who initially had the lowest levels, were higher than for the young population (18–24 years).

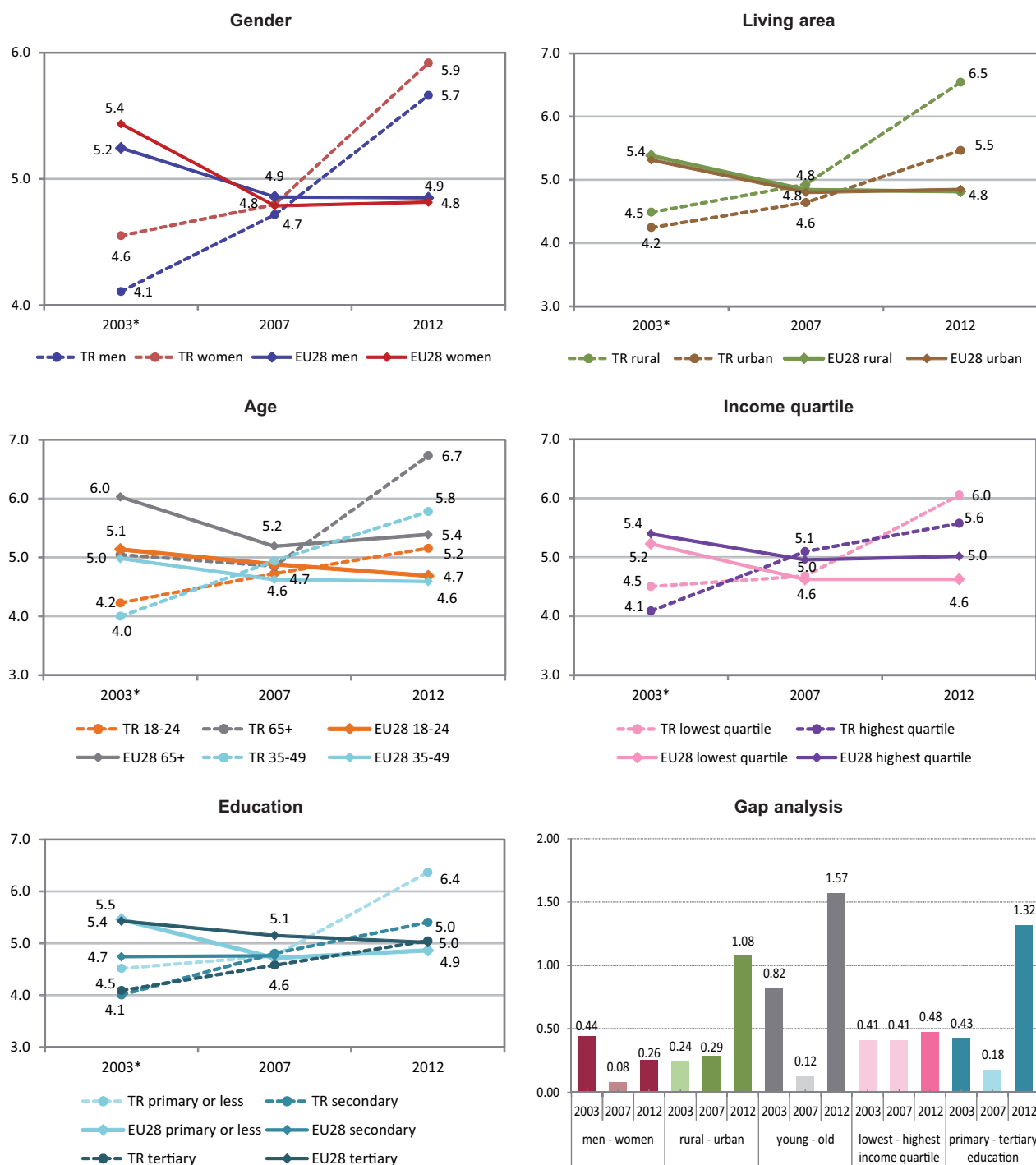
Satisfaction reportedly rose for both the highest and lowest income quartile, with respondents from the lowest income quartile showing very strong increases after 2007. Interestingly, those from the lowest income quartile were generally more satisfied in 2012, while increases in satisfaction with the pensions system in the highest income quartile (displaying strong improvements from 2003 to 2007) became more moderate after 2007.

Satisfaction rose for all education categories, most markedly for those with less education (primary or lower) education. It was highest for those with lower education throughout the period, with gaps between groups falling before rising again.

Gaps were highest and increased the most for older people, those with a lower education level and rural dwellers, all of whom had a higher than average level of satisfaction with the quality of the state pension system in 2012. Income-related gaps could become an issue, though this is not yet clear, while gender gaps declined.

³ It was decided to focus on these three age groups only in the split charts, given the density of information they contain. Other age groups (25–34 and 50–64 years) were omitted.

Figure 5: Trends in satisfaction with quality of state pension system, 2003–2012 (1–10)



Notes: Q53g. Colours in the gap chart refer to splits in the other charts, with transparent bars indicating gaps not significant at 5% level in a certain year. * 2003 EQLS data set only for EU27 (Croatia not yet available).

Sources: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

Health and healthcare

From 2003 to 2012, changes in the provision of healthcare services improved healthcare coverage and access, especially for less wealthy people, who are now included in Turkish healthcare coverage. New regulations have facilitated access to medical services for the whole population, driven by initiatives such as the introduction of a general health insurance system for universal health care coverage, a system of general practitioners as first contact points and the opening up of facilities for general use, which has undoubtedly benefited all. However, those with previously good access might feel that the quality of services has declined, since doctors treat more patients and can no longer combine work in public healthcare facilities with private practice and/or research work. These changes reduce the level of interest among well-paid professionals to work in the (low salaried) public healthcare sector. As a result of a debate on this issue, in January 2014, a new bill re-introduced the option of having a private practice for physicians working for the government and in university hospitals.

Satisfaction with health

From 2003 to 2012, satisfaction with health in Turkey was close to the EU28 average. During this period this rate fell before overtaking the EU level in 2012 (Figure 6). Looking at different population groups, similar patterns emerge. Satisfaction with health in Turkey has always been greater for men than for women. It was higher in urban areas in 2003; however, while satisfaction with health steadily increased over time in rural areas, urban–rural differences later became statistically insignificant.

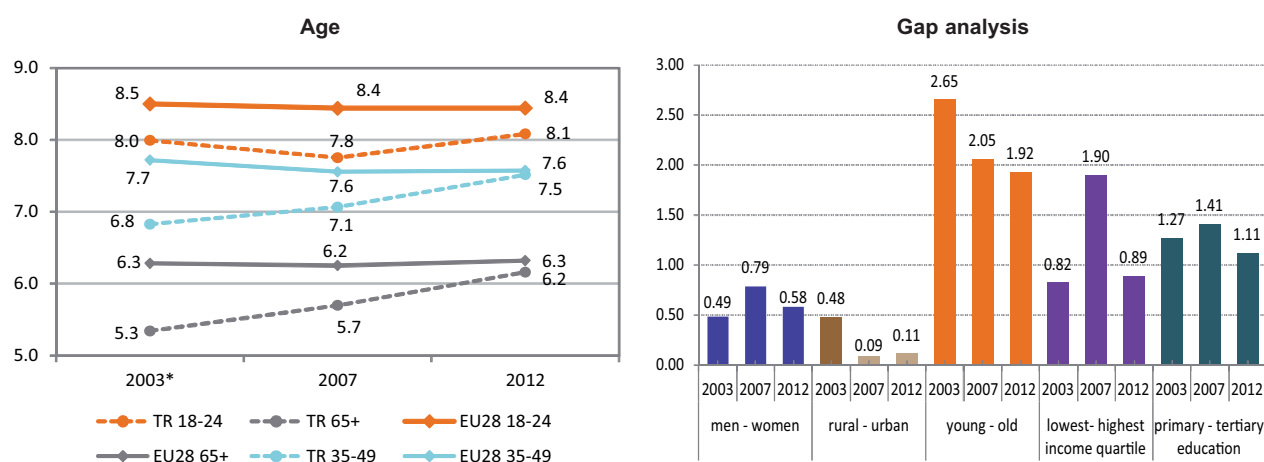
Satisfaction with health was always lower than the EU28 average. While this has risen for those in the middle and older age categories, younger people showed slightly declining self-reported health from 2003 to 2007; however, by 2012 it had returned to the 2003 level.

Satisfaction with health is strongly related to income, with those in the highest income quartile reporting higher and steadily increasing satisfaction over the observed 10 years. Rates for people in the lowest income quartile declined between 2003 and 2007 before rising again, so that by 2012 satisfaction was higher than in 2003. It was also higher for those with higher education, across all observed years.

Differences in satisfaction with health, from 2003 to 2012, were highest between older and younger people. Little to no difference was found by urban–rural location. Gender differences increased in 2007 but fell back to their original level in 2012, as did differences related to income and education.

Differences between Turkey and the EU28 might be caused by higher stress levels and negative health outcomes for people in the EU28 during the economic crisis and, later, the hope of economic recovery. Turkey was less affected by the crisis and increases in reported satisfaction with health levels were most likely related to improvements in health services.

Figure 6: Trends in satisfaction with health, 2003–2012 (1–10)



Note: Q40f. * 2003 EQLS data set only for EU27 (Croatia not yet available).

Sources: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

Satisfaction with quality of health services

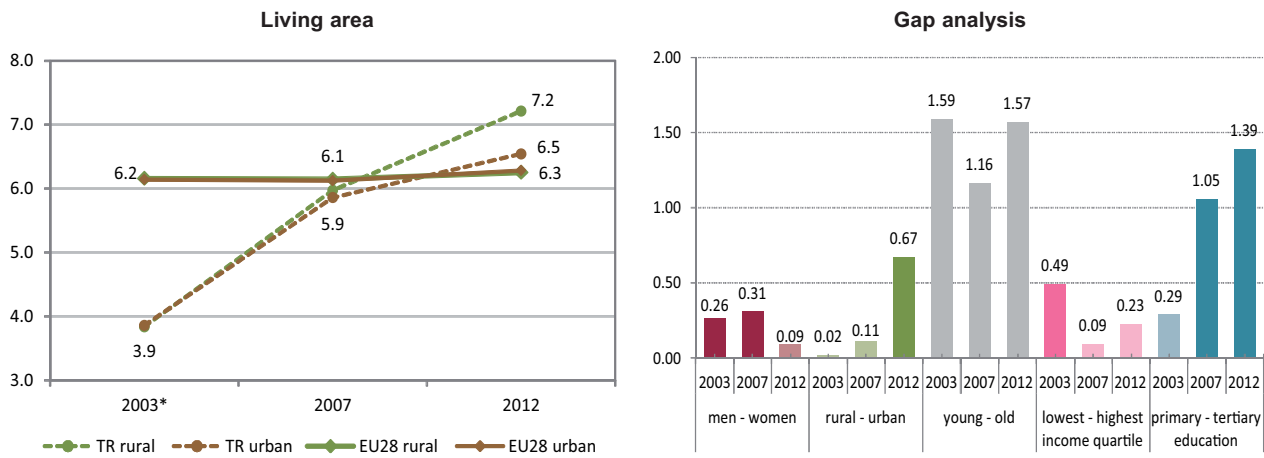
Between 2003 and 2012, satisfaction with quality of health services in Turkey increased hugely. Starting at a low level, Turkey surpassing the EU28 average in 2012 in this regard (Figure 7). Satisfaction with the quality of health services in Turkey was slightly higher for women, though there was no significant gender difference by 2012. It improved greatly in both rural and urban areas. With stronger increases after 2007, satisfaction with the quality of health services was significantly higher in rural Turkey (7.2) in 2012.

Satisfaction with the quality of health services was highest for older people, for whom it was higher than the EU28 average in 2007. With lower increases after 2007, middle-aged people also overtook the EU28 average in 2012 while young people still remained slightly below it.

It improved greatly for both the lowest and highest income quartiles, with differences related to income disappearing over time. Those with a higher income seem a little less satisfied, which may be related to the fact that the expansion of the health system to all people reduced access for those better off. It also improved, most noticeably, for those with a lower level of education; for this group, satisfaction with the quality of health services remained highest throughout the observed period.

Differences in satisfaction with the quality of health services in Turkey were largest between older and younger people. It was growing between different educational groups and, although at smaller rates, between rural and urban areas. Gender gaps and income gaps in satisfaction with quality of health services decreased during the 10-year period and were non-existent in 2012.

Figure 7: Trends in satisfaction with quality of health services, 2003–2012 (1–10)



Note: Q53a.

Source: *EQLS 2003*; *EQLS 2007*; *EQLS 2012*.

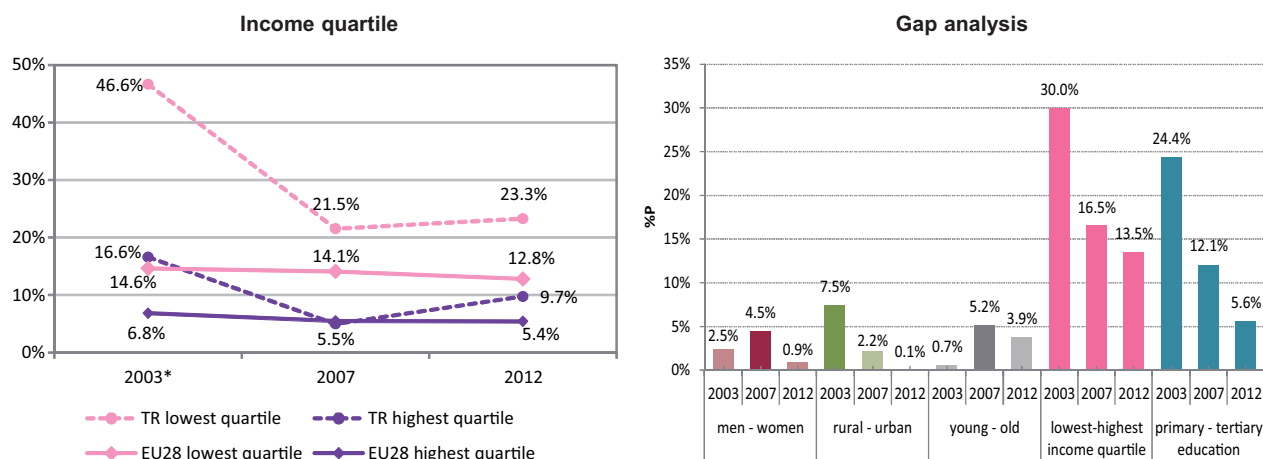
Cost as a barrier

With the new healthcare system, cost-related access to healthcare in Turkey became much less of a problem from 2003 to 2007, even if later cutbacks slightly offset improvements (Figure 8). However, cost remained a barrier for certain groups, at certain points in time. For example, it was higher for women in 2007 (with otherwise no significant gender differences). It was also higher in rural areas than in cities in 2003, though no significant differences occurred afterwards. It was highest for those in the middle age group, both in 2003 and 2012. In 2007, it was highest for the oldest age group, for which it remained high in 2012.

Cost remained a much higher barrier to general practitioner access for those in the lowest income quartile. Despite massive improvements, which were appreciated by citizens, individual contributions for medical services and prescriptions, although still at very low levels, have been steadily increasing; this is exemplified in a decree by the Ministry of Health (Official Gazette, February 2012). It was also significantly higher for those with a lower level of education, even if this difference declined over time. The share of people with a third-level education who reported cost as a problem for seeing a doctor decreased from 2003 to 2007 but increased again in 2012. Similarly, the share of people with a primary education only who reported this as a barrier decreased strongly from 2003 to 2007, increasing only a little afterwards.

By 2012, socioeconomic differences were largest regarding income and educational attainment. They were not significant for gender, area or age.

Figure 8: Trends in cost as barrier to seeing a doctor (%)



Note: Figures are percentages of those who answered 'very difficult'
 Sources: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

Distance as a barrier

Long distances to healthcare services, such as a doctor's surgery, hospital or medical centre, can also limit access to healthcare. Although the proportion who reported distance was a 'very difficult' problem was larger than the EU28 average, this situation has been improving in recent years.

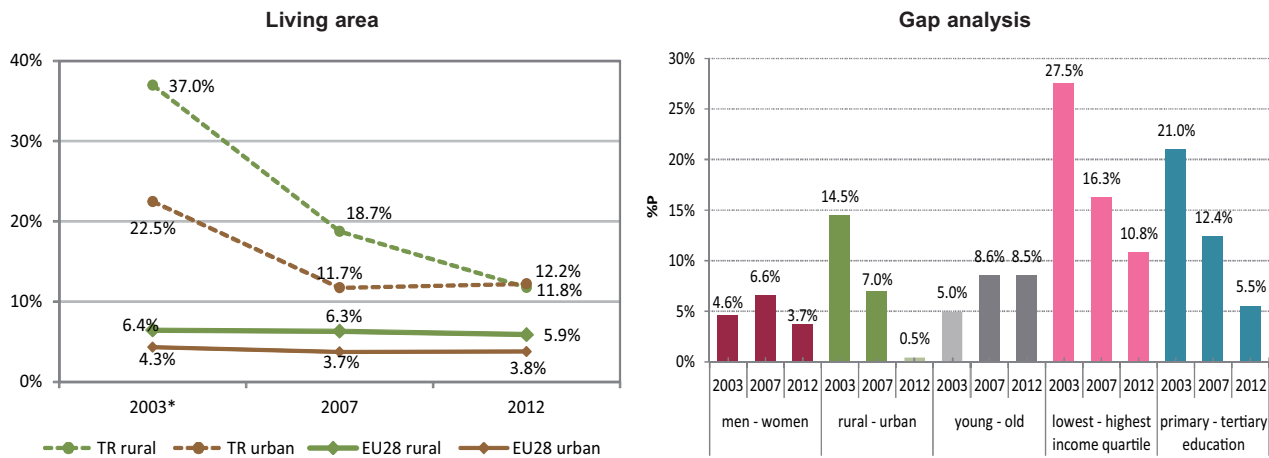
From 2003 to 2012, distance as a difficulty in seeing a doctor in Turkey was reported more often by women than by men; a similar trend was found for the EU28.

This barrier was higher among the rural population although the share of those reporting grave difficulties with distance in rural areas fell rapidly from 2003 to 2007 and continued to decline afterwards.

This was generally reported to be higher by older people; after 2003, other age groups were less affected. It was a much bigger problem for those in the lowest income quartile, although perceived problems rapidly declined over time as a result of healthcare reform.

While women and older people continue to fare worse than others, location – an important divider in 2003 – was no longer a significant factor by 2012. Income and education, which caused the largest differences in 2003, became less significant by 2012, although important differences remained.

Figure 9: Trends in distance as problem in seeing a doctor (%)



Note: Figures are percentages of those who answered 'very difficult'
Source: *EQLS 2003*; *EQLS 2007*; *EQLS 2012*.

Standard of living

As a result of its large population, Turkey ranked seventh in Europe with respect to consumer spending in 2011. It is a huge market for selling products, with total consumer expenditure almost equal to that in the Czech Republic, Greece, Ireland and Portugal combined. From 2002 to 2012, the Turkish total retail market grew markedly, increasing from USD 94.3 billion to USD 295 billion (Kucuk, 2013).

This steady increase in consumer spending brought about higher living standards, even if this came with considerable discrepancies across different parts of the population. However, growth in consumer expenditure has had a serious downside as well: it resulted in significant decreases in Turkey's already low savings rate. At current prices, private savings in 2001 amounted to 25.5% of GDP but were down to 10.5% in 2011 (Özlale and Karakurt, 2012). In 2013, the government took measures to curb spending and increase savings. For example, as an incentive for long-term savings, since January 2013 the state has been paying a 25% bonus for every Turkish lira placed in private retirement funds.

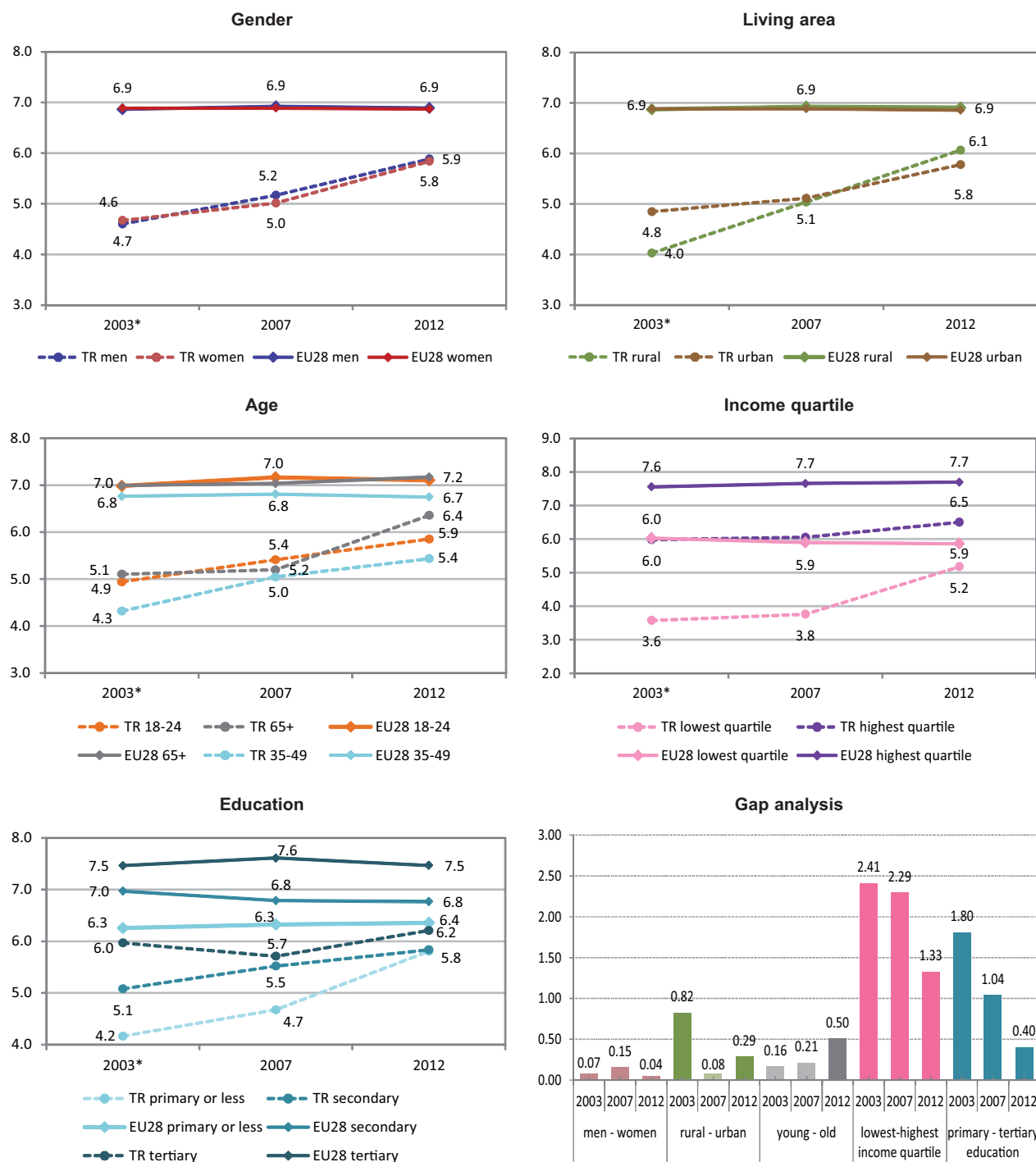
In Turkey, satisfaction with standard of living increased throughout the observed years, during a time when European countries were hit by the economic crisis. This trend was also reported by TUIK. Although still markedly below the EU28 average, Turkey has come closer to EU countries in satisfaction with one's own standard of living (see Figure 10). From 2003 to 2012, satisfaction with own living standard in Turkey strongly increased for both men and women, with no (significant) gender differences. It also increased for people in both rural and urban areas. While higher in urban areas in 2003, increases in rural areas grew more, so that in 2012 satisfaction with standard of living among rural dwellers surpassed that for city dwellers.

Satisfaction with standard of living increased across all age groups, but remained lowest for those aged 35–49 years. After 2007, it increased the most for the older age group (65+ years). It also increased for those in the lowest income quartile after 2007, though it remained much higher for those in the highest income quartile across all years. Finally, it increased for those whose education did not go past primary level, especially after 2007. A decrease was observed among those with a third-level education, followed by an increase.

From 2003 to 2012, the biggest differences were found regarding income and education levels, though these differences decreased over time. Age-related differences increased from 2003 to 2012, with older people's reported standard of

living increasing over time. Regarding location, rural dwellers also saw an increase in standard of living between 2003 and 2012.

Figure 10: Trend in satisfaction with standard of living (1–10)



Source: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

Quality of housing and local neighbourhood

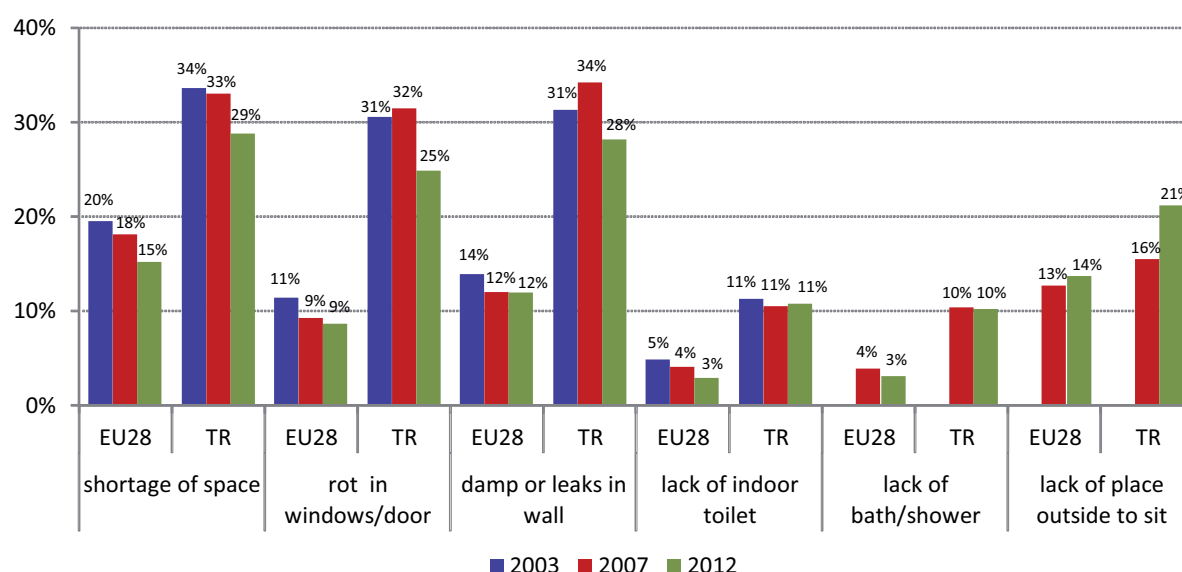
Recently, there have been many new construction activities in Turkey, improving the housing situation considerably. TOKI, a government agency in charge of new housing, has been engaged in massive construction projects in partnership with private contractors. At the end of 2013, TOKI announced that a total of 622,403 housing units had been constructed or were in the process of being constructed under its auspices between November 2002 and March 2014. Indeed, Turkey went through a construction boom between 2002 and 2013. This period saw a dramatic increase in the number of building permits issued in Turkey, from 36,187 permits in 2002 to 168,208 permits in 2013 (TUIK, 2013).

Quality of accommodation

Despite improvements, quality of accommodation is still perceived to be much lower in Turkey than the EU28 average. Trends from 2003 to 2012 suggest that shortage of space, rot and damp or leaks remain the biggest problems in Turkey. EQLS data reveal the following.

- The share of people reporting a space shortage remained much higher than the EU28 average – although declining, in 2012 it was twice as high as the European average.
- Rot in windows, doors and floors was less of an issue. Reported to be the second-most felt issue in 2003, rot became less problematic over time; this was most likely related to the above-mentioned construction activity and accompanying changes in accommodation.
- The share of those reporting problems with damp or leaks in walls or roof declined only slightly. Reported problems remained at a rather high level, reported nearly two and a half times as often as the EU28 average.
- The lack of an indoor flushing toilet or bath did not change in Turkey. The EU28 average figure for this declined slightly during the same period.
- The lack of a place to sit outside, such as a garden, balcony or terrace, was increasingly reported as a problem both in Turkey and the EU28. A higher incidence of this problem in Turkey might be explained by changing living conditions fostered by growing urbanisation and migration to cities.

Figure 11: Trends in problems with accommodation (%)



Note: Shows share of those reporting problems with accommodation; Q19: Do you have any of the following problems with your accommodation?

Source: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

Looking at the total number of problems reported with quality of housing in the first four categories mentioned above (space, rot, damp and lack of indoor toilet), EQLS data show that women reported more problems than men in both Turkey and the EU28. The proportion of rural dwellers reporting this problem initially declined, but then returned to the 2003 rate, and was always higher than in urban areas. After 2007, urban areas show visible improvements; this was most likely an outcome of the ongoing building activity and the development of new, and thus better, housing.

Age does not account for significant differences in the quality of accommodation. Having lower income, however, obviously results in worse housing conditions. Education also has a significant impact on problems with housing quality; those with lower education levels report a higher number of problems. Yet, while the rate of such problems increased up to 2007, they later decreased for all social groups.

Differences in housing quality remain significant and high in relation to income and education, and significant but less distinct for gender and location.

Figure 12: *Trending in quality of housing (0–4 problems)*



Notes: Shows number of problems reported (0–4); Q19

Source: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

Quality of local neighbourhood

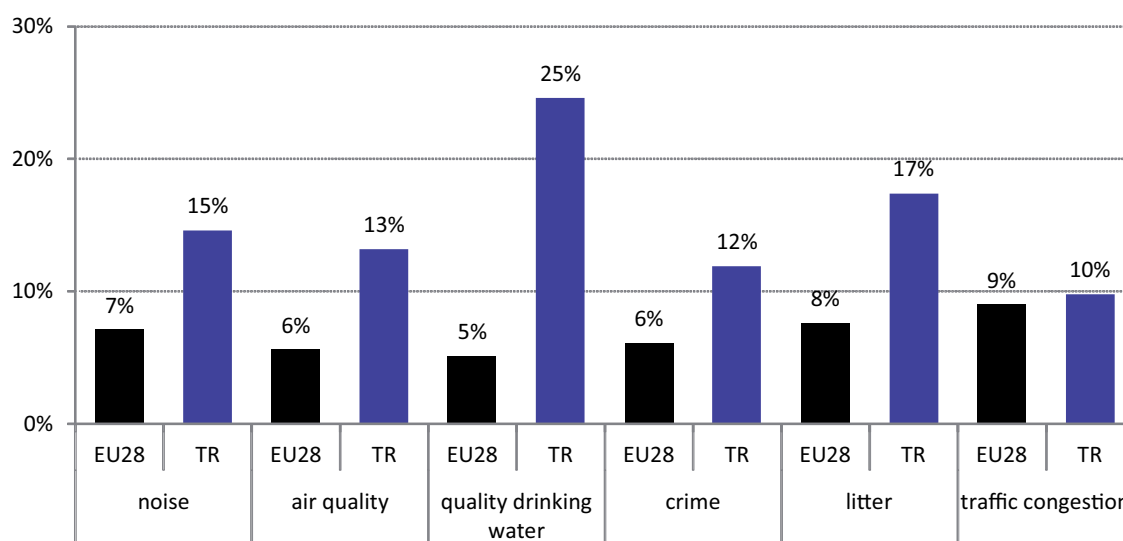
With the new housing projects, the quality of the local environment has become an issue. New housing construction, most of which involves high-rise buildings and even skyscrapers in metropolitan centres, has been criticised for creating more problems than it solves. It is seen as disrespecting the environment and the country's historical heritage, as lacking a sense of aesthetics, as affecting the air quality in city centres and as causing traffic problems. Massive housing projects in large urban areas (particularly Istanbul and Ankara), mostly targeting upper-income groups, continue to put serious strain on infrastructure and transport.

Investigating the perceived quality of the local neighbourhood, the EQLS data reveal that a sizeable proportion of Turkish respondents reported major problems. Data were only available for 2012 on this issue; findings are summarised here.

- The quality of drinking water is perceived to be a problem by one-quarter of respondents; slightly more so among urban dwellers (26%) and young people (26%).
- Woman (20%) and young people (22%) are more likely to report that litter is a problem. No urban–rural differences were found.

- Noise is a bigger problem for women (16%), urban dwellers (18%) and young people (20%).
- The same applies to air quality, which affects 14.2% of women, 16.2% of urban dwellers and 18.2% of young people.
- Traffic congestion is seen to be a major problem in urban areas (12%) and by young people (13%).
- Perception of crime, violence and vandalism vary by living area. The proportion of people perceiving crime, violence and vandalism as a major problem is about four times higher in urban (15%) than in rural (4%) areas. Gender and age are not significant.

Figure 13: Major problems in local neighbourhood (%)



Notes: Q50: Please think about the area where you live now – I mean the immediate neighbourhood of your home. Do you have major, moderate or no problems with the following? (Shows percentage with major problems.)

Source: *EQLS 2003*; *EQLS 2007*; *EQLS 2012*.

Economic well-being and social inclusion

Difficulties in making ends meet

The concept of making ends meet refers to a household's ability to survive on its total monthly income. The EQLS investigates how well a household is able to 'make ends meet'. The concept of 'difficulty in making ends meet' refers to households reporting great or medium difficulty in this regard – the share of those finding it 'difficult' or 'very difficult' to make ends meet.

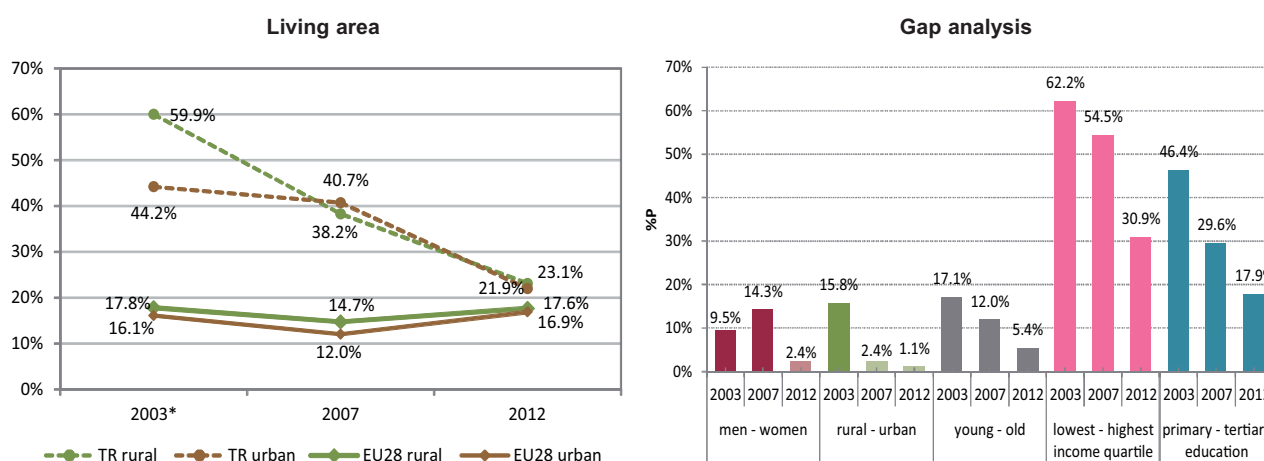
Between 2003 and 2012, the number of households experiencing difficulties in making ends meet in Turkey more than halved, most noticeably from 2007 to 2012. At 22% in 2012, Turkey came close to the EU28 average (17%) in this regard. Turkish people not only seem unaffected by the economic crisis but also to be improving in terms of income and wealth (see Figure 14). EQLS data reveal that from 2003 to 2012, the incidence of those experiencing difficulties in making ends meet fell for all groups. However, rates were higher for women than for men. The rate of improvement was largest for women after 2007. Improvements were particularly noticeable in rural areas where difficulties were much greater in 2003.

Regarding age, older people experienced the greatest level of improvement, while the youngest age category reported the fewest problems. In 2012, the rate reported by the middle age group was highest.

In relation to income, the largest improvements were noted for the lowest income earners between 2007 and 2012. However, difficulties in making ends meet remained much higher for those in the lowest income quartile. Regarding education, the biggest improvements occurred for those with primary-level education or lower. Generally, those with higher education reported fewer problems.

The biggest differences in difficulty in making ends meet were found across income and education categories, though these differences shrank during the 10 years. Regarding age groups, by 2012 differences were still significant though smaller than before. Gender and location were not significant in 2012. Differences related to income and age are self-explanatory: those in good health, with a higher education or higher income usually have better financial security, although age-based differences might indicate varying levels of job and income security. Those in the middle age group seem to feel that they are worse off than other groups (Figure 14). This should be taken into account in efforts to improve social inclusion in terms of economic well-being and to make sure that in the process of rapid modernisation and reforms no groups are left behind.

Figure 14: Trends in difficulties in making ends meet (%)



Note: Shows percentage finding this 'difficult' and 'very difficult'. Q58

Source: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

Deprivation index

Deprivation remains a huge issue in Turkey, at least for some people and particularly regarding important items of everyday use. In general, deprivation refers to a state of economic strain related to the fact that people cannot afford to pay for selected items considered vital for everyday life. Although lists of items can vary depending on the concepts used, like material deprivation used by Eurostat (2014b) and the deprivation index in the EQLS, deprivation is always related to an inability (rather than choice) to partake in the consumption of listed goods.

The deprivation index used below measures the level of deprivation: the number of items out of a list of six that households cannot afford even if they would like them. Items include 'keeping home adequately warm', 'paying for annual holiday away from home', 'replacing worn-out furniture', 'a meal with meat, chicken, fish every second day if you want it', 'buying new rather than second-hand clothes' and 'having friends or family for a drink or meal at least once a month'.

While deprivation in the EU28 remained quite stable in the observed decade, the number of items that people could not afford in Turkey increased slightly, then decreased slightly before reaching the rather high rate of 2.9 in 2012 (see Table A2 in the Annex). EQLS data reveal group differences. Deprivation is generally higher for women, with gender gaps

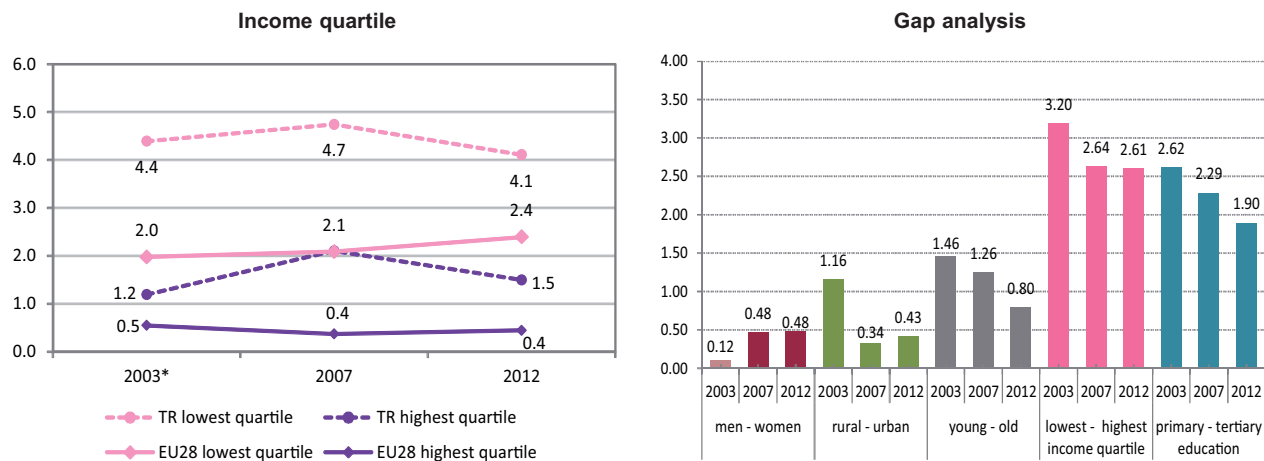
slightly increasing over time. It is also higher in rural than in urban areas. While steadily decreasing in rural areas, the rate increased among urban dwellers, before falling again from 2007 to 2012.

The rate is also higher for older age groups, though again, this has decreased. Accordingly, age differences – although still larger than the EU28 average – have become smaller over time. It is much higher for those in the lowest income quartile. The income-related gap (although largest in terms of socio demographic characteristics) has slightly decreased over time. In addition, lower education is related to higher deprivation, but the situation has improved for all groups and education-related gaps have become smaller.

With the exception of those in rural areas, most groups felt more deprived in 2007 than at any other time. Urbanisation might play a role, with life becoming ‘more stressful’ and consumption-oriented in cities but resulting in an ongoing positive financial ‘spill-over’ into the countryside due to transfers of funds to families left behind, which (together with the reforms in various public services) allow for a perception of continuous improvements in rural areas.

Socioeconomic differences related to deprivation remain large for income, education and (to a lesser extent) age. Gender and location are also important, but to a smaller degree.

Figure 15: Trends in deprivation index, Turkey



Note: Based on average number of items cannot afford, 0–6 items. Q.59

Source: *EQLS 2003*; *EQLS 2007*; *EQLS 2012*.

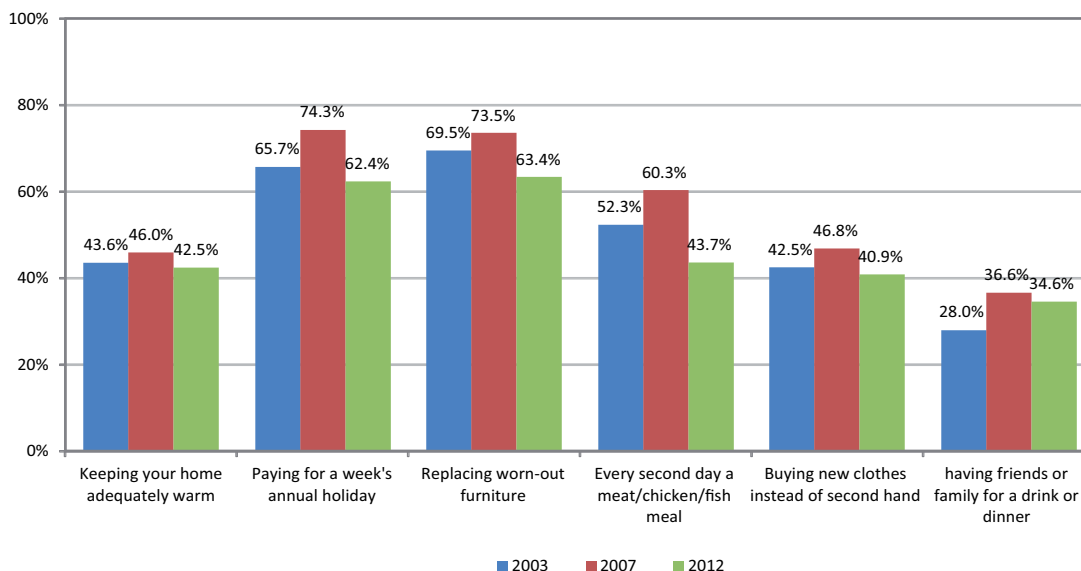
Taking the six items of the above deprivation index separately, EQLS data reveal that in Turkey all groups experienced an upward trend in deprivation between 2003 and 2007, followed by a decrease, for all six items, between 2007 and 2012. Despite this improvement, nearly two-thirds could not afford to replace worn out furniture in 2012 (63%) or pay for a week’s annual holiday (62%).

Having friends or family for a drink or a meal (at least once a month) proved to be far less of an issue; however, from 2003 to 2012, the share of those who could afford to do so increased from a little more than one-quarter to more than one-third.

Food-related deprivation is still an issue for many, although affording a meal with meat, chicken or fish every second day (if wanted) has become less of a problem over time. Nonetheless, in 2012 more than 40% still reported this to be a problem. Similarly, keeping one’s home adequately warm and buying new clothes still causes difficulty for more than 40% of respondents, with slight improvements over time.

Even if assuming that new furniture and holidays are not essential items of everyday life, it becomes clear that despite generally positive developments between 2007 and 2012, deprivation in everyday necessities is still an issue for a large part of the population.

Figure 16: Development of reported deprivation by item (%)



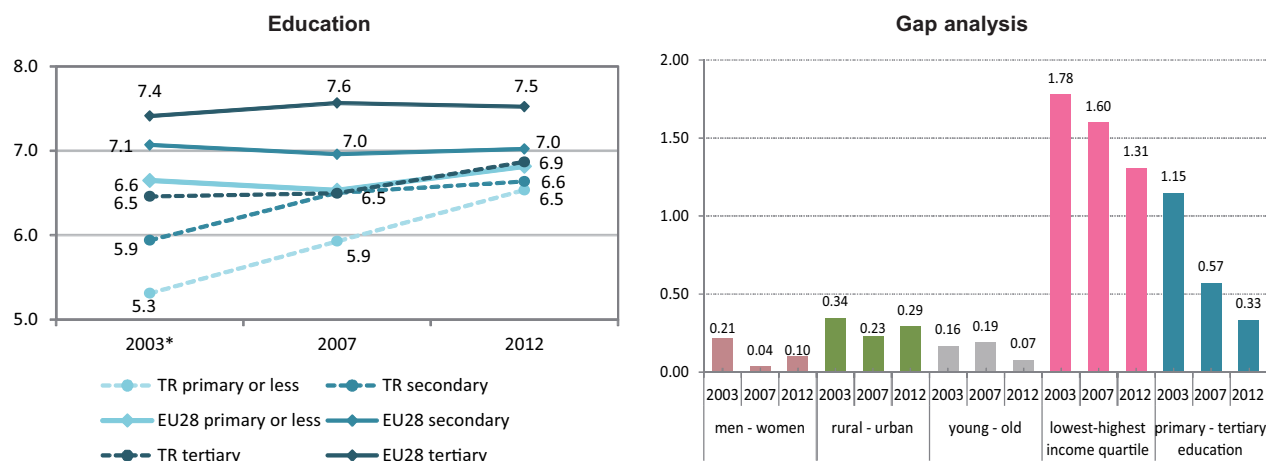
Note: The chart show the percentage of respondents who cannot afford each item.

Source: *EQLS 2003*; *EQLS 2007*; *EQLS 2012*.

Determinants of life satisfaction

While gender and age do not seem to matter, urban dwellers in Turkey showed slightly higher satisfaction levels in 2003 and 2012 than rural dwellers. Larger differences were found when analysed by income and education: those in the highest income quartile and those with higher education levels were much more satisfied. While education-related differences in satisfaction decreased, income-related differences remained high, while location-related variations remained significant.

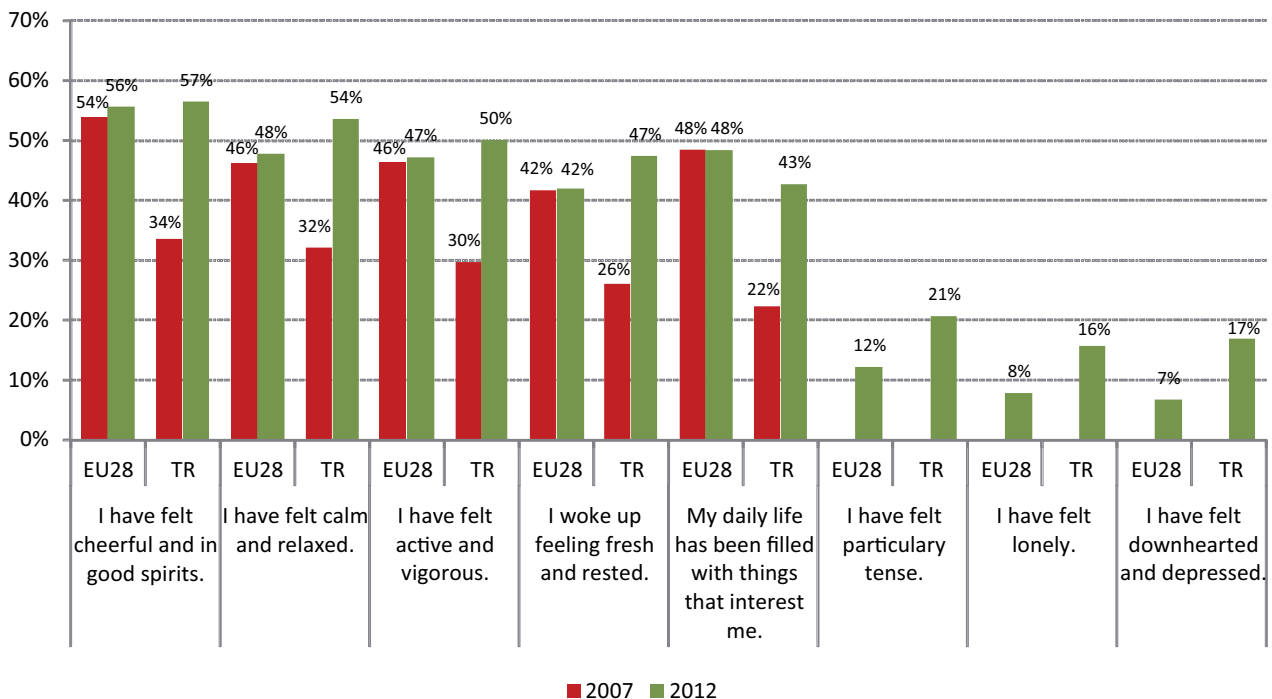
Figure 17: Trends in overall life satisfaction



Source: *EQLS 2003*; *EQLS 2007*; *EQLS 2012*.

In addition to an overall rise in life satisfaction, EQLS data reveal that positive feelings and perceptions – indicators of mental well-being – have generally increased. While below the EU28 average in 2007, in 2012 Turkish respondents scored better in all categories except one. They overtook the EU28 average in relation to being in positive and cheerful spirits, being relaxed and calm, feeling active and vigorous and feeling fresh and relaxed after sleeping. The only life satisfaction category in which they remained below the EU28 average was the perception of having a daily life filled with interesting things, although this has much improved since 2007. Despite this, the proportion of those feeling tense, depressed, lonely or downhearted all or most of the time in Turkey is higher than the EU28 average. Unfortunately, data only exist for 2012 as this was a new question, so no trend can be analysed.

Figure 18: *Indicators of mental well-being (%)*



Notes: Q45: Please indicate for each of the five statements which is closest to how you have been feeling over the last two weeks. Q46: Please indicate for each of the statements which is closest to how you have been feeling over the last two weeks. Shows proportion choosing 'all' and 'most of the time'.

Source: *EQLS, 2007; EQLS, 2012.*

Multivariate regression analysis

Multivariate regression analysis enables the investigation of the most important drivers of overall life satisfaction. In regressions with grand mean centring, the intercept represents an average person. Effects shown for certain characteristics (Figure 20) represent deviations from this predicted average and thus correspond to (positive or negative) drivers of overall life satisfaction.

Based on EQLS data, Figure 19 shows the model's prediction for Turkey for the years 2003, 2007 and 2012. While the blue dots indicate increasing average life satisfaction over time, stripes (for main effects) and black symbols (for interaction effects) indicate significant impacts on overall life satisfaction for certain groups or characteristics. In 2003, for example, the effect of being a woman rather than a man increased a person's overall life satisfaction by +0.5 (red stripe).

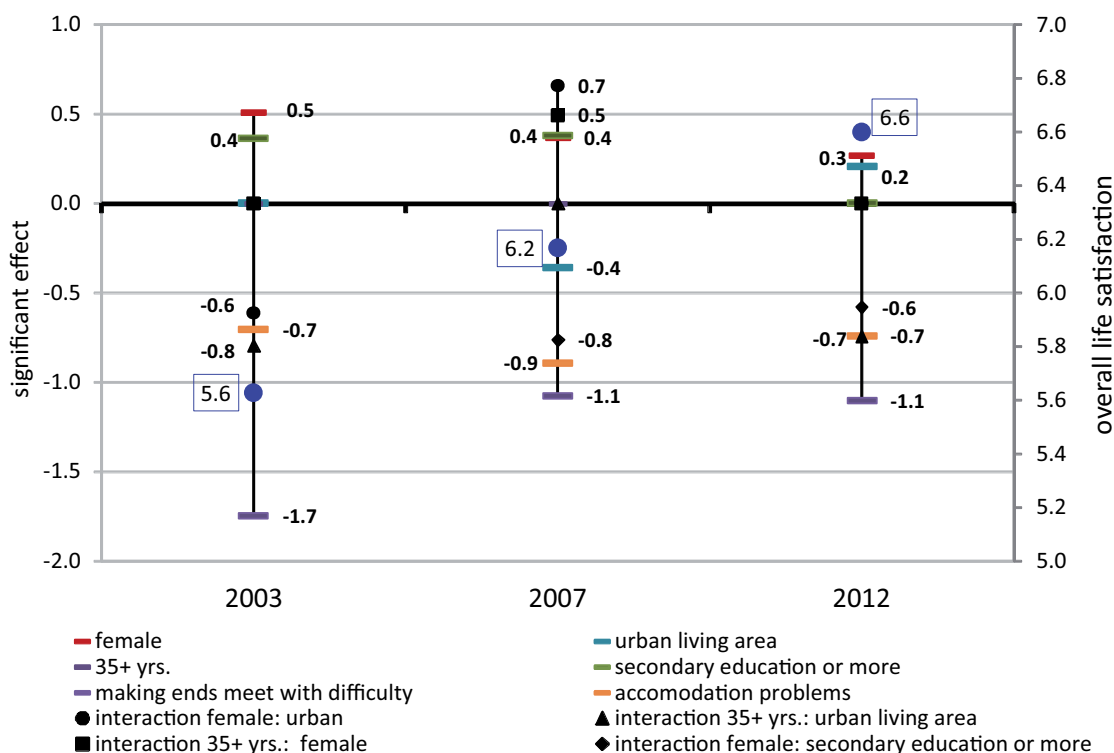
Overall life satisfaction was found to be significantly influenced by the following:

- ‘having difficulties in making ends meet’, which had a strong, negative effect in all three years, even if decreasing over time;
- ‘having accommodation problems’, which had a consistently negative effect (of reporting at least one out of six accommodation problems) in all three years;
- gender, with being a woman having a positive (but slightly declining) impact in all three years;
- ‘having secondary or tertiary education’, which had a positive effect in 2003 and 2007, though was not significant in 2012;
- location, with urban location having a negative impact in 2007 but, interestingly, a positive one in 2012.

Some effects were significant drivers only, or mostly, for the following categories:

- those aged 35 years and over and living in an urban area (negative effect in 2003 and 2012), most likely due to working age stress;
- women with a higher education level (negative effect in 2007 and 2012), most likely due to social norms and restrictions;
- women living in an urban area, which had a negative effect in 2003 and a positive one in 2007, this shift most likely being due to improvements in public services;
- women aged over 35 years, which had a positive effect in 2007.

Figure 19: *Effects on overall life satisfaction, 2003–2012*



Source: Multivariate regression based on EQLS 2003, 2007 and 2012.

Investigating all three years in detail, the model predicts the following effects on overall life satisfaction (with numbers in brackets referring to overall life satisfaction scores).

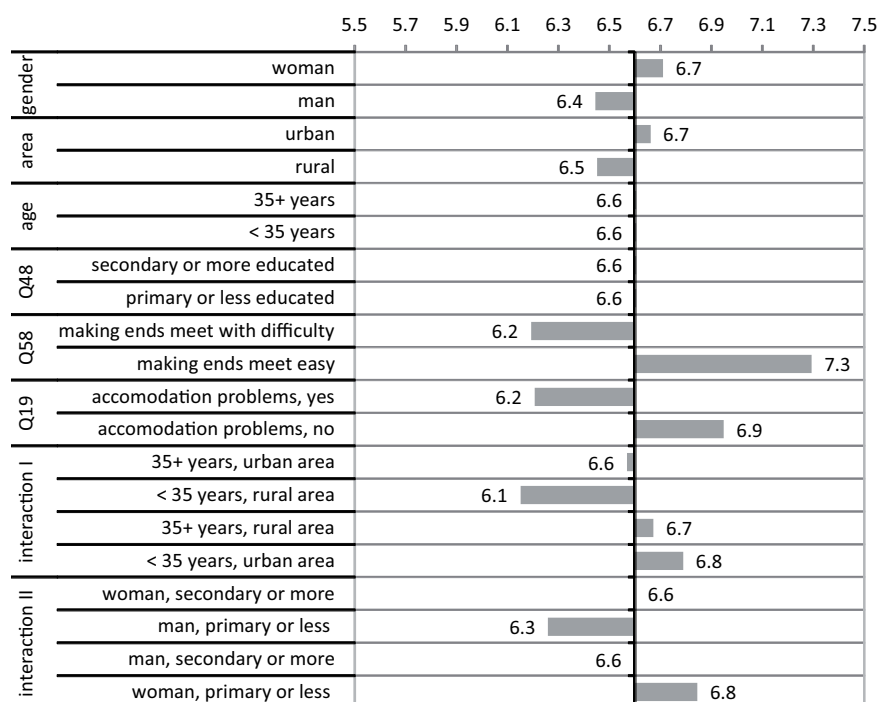
Despite increases in overall life satisfaction, there is no clear trend related to location. An explanation might be changing migration flows, which impact on the composition of the rural and urban population. Gender differences remain, even if they are diminishing. Age alone does not matter, but offers some interesting interaction effects. Education becomes an issue from 2007 onwards, when lower-educated men report lower overall life satisfaction while a higher level of education seems to have lost its positive effect.

In 2003 (predicted average 5.6), making ends meet easily (7.0); being a women in a rural area (6.1) and no accommodation problems (6.0) raise overall life satisfaction while being a men in a rural area (5.1), making ends meet with difficulty only (5.2) and accommodation problems (5.3) decrease it. People younger than 35 years were more satisfied when living in urban areas, at 5.9 as compared to 5.3 for those in rural areas, while people aged 35 years or older were more satisfied when living in rural areas (5.7 as compared to 5.5).

In 2007 (predicted average 6.2), making ends meet easily (7.0) and no accommodation problems (6.6) were the strongest drivers of overall life satisfaction. The main negative effects were associated with being a man with a low education level (5.6), being a man in an urban area (5.7) as well as accommodation problems (5.8). Effects related to age show that women over 35 years (6.4) were more satisfied than younger women (6.2), while younger men (6.1) were more satisfied than men over 35 years (5.8). While men and women in rural areas were satisfied at similar levels (6.4), men in urban areas were much less satisfied than women (6.3). In contrast to men, lower education does not impact on women's life satisfaction (6.3).

In 2012 (predicted average 6.6, see Figure 20), again, making ends meet easily or with difficulty and the existence or non-existence of accommodation problems have the strongest impact on overall life satisfaction. Effects are strong and negative for young people in rural areas and for men with a primary or lower level of education. While men and women with a secondary or higher level of education only score an average effect here, overall life satisfaction for women with a low level of education is high.

Figure 20: Overall life satisfaction – Predicted values of model for 2012



Source: multivariate regression based on EQLS 2012.

Summary and policy pointers

Despite generally increased satisfaction with the quality of the Turkish state pension system from 2003 to 2012, EQLS data reveal increasing gaps related to age, education and living area. Although those in the lowest income quartile have recently shown higher satisfaction levels as well, the effect is more pronounced for older people, those with a lower level of education and rural dwellers. Young people and those with a high education level seem to have been the least happy in 2012. There is a need for further steps to move informal work into the formal sphere and to raise low retirement ages. Accordingly, pension schemes and related costs need to be monitored, and sustainable and inclusive reforms need to be developed.

A decrease was observed in age-related differences regarding satisfaction with health, caused by remarkably higher satisfaction levels among older people. While higher income and education continue to positively impact on this, it is clear that the healthcare reform has greatly improved the situation of older people, rural dwellers and the less well off.

Improvements in the quality of health services are reflected in higher satisfaction with services, reported by all groups. It seems that reforms have improved access and lowered costs, especially for those who were farthest away from services and those with the lowest entitlement to access services: rural dwellers and older people. Care should be taken so that future budget cuts do not erode these improvements.

Cost and distance posed significant barriers to healthcare access in 2003, and both these barriers have since been greatly reduced. Again, the rural population seems to have profited the most. However, a certain disadvantage seems to remain for those on a lower income or with a lower education level, as well as for older people, for whom distance remains an issue.

Satisfaction with standard of living increased for all. Although declining, group differences remained highest for different income and education levels. Initially, urban dwellers were more satisfied with their standard of living, but by 2012 rural dwellers had overtaken them. EQLS data also reveal an increasing age gap, with the older generation more satisfied.

Problems with quality of accommodation – although decreasing – remained high in terms of shortage of space, rot in windows, doors and floors as well as damp or leaks. Regarding local neighbourhood issues, the quality of the drinking water, litter and noise were reported to be the biggest problems in 2012. Despite recent efforts to provide affordable housing, accommodation and quality of local neighbourhood remain areas for further improvement.

With the older generation reporting huge improvements in terms of difficulty in making ends meet, the age gap visibly decreased. Women reported more problems but the gender gap had disappeared by 2012. Although declining in importance, income and education remain influential.

Deprivation decreased from 2007 onwards for all groups, but remained high for those with a low income, a low education, older people and middle-aged people. Rural dwellers felt less deprived in 2012 than before. EQLS data reveal that ‘having friends or family for a drink or a meal’ was less of a problem than ‘replacing old furniture’ or ‘paying for a week’s annual holiday’. However, having meat or fish, keeping the house warm and buying new clothes remained a problem for more than 40% in 2012.

A large share of the population reported feeling positive about their situation in 2012. Overall life satisfaction was generally highest for urban dwellers and those with a higher income or education level. The following main drivers of overall life satisfaction were identified: no difficulties in making ends meet; no accommodation problems; and being female. All three had a significant effect on overall life satisfaction across the three years, while higher education only mattered up to 2007. Location and age were only significant as interaction effects in certain years, which points to a changing society.

Progress in gender equality 4

This chapter charts progress made in the area of gender equality over the last 10 years as reported in EQLS data. While the report can only give an initial insight into recent attainments (such as improvements in women's and girls' access to health services and education, legal developments and gains in the field of gender equality), it should be stressed that major developments are under way. This chapter investigates the current situation, including trends in women's political participation, access to education and labour market activity, as well as gender equality in everyday life.

The gender equality index published by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE, 2013) covers six core domains of gender equality:

- work;
- money;
- knowledge;
- time;
- power;
- health.

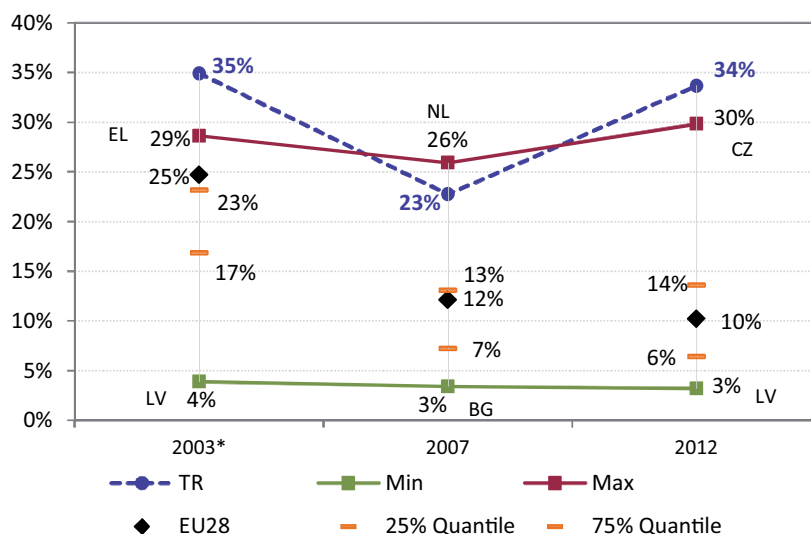
It also includes two satellite domains – intersecting inequalities and violence. However, this is only available for EU countries.

Gender equality is recognised to be of importance by Turkish policymakers and gender activists (Füle 2013, TAIEX, 2013). However, some feel that 'the state's capacity to take actions to ameliorate the relatively high tensions between women and men in Turkish society is problematic' (Eurofound, 2007, p. 52).

Tensions between men and women

In Turkey, tensions between men and women are reported more often than in the EU28. Although they decreased from 2003 to 2007, tensions grew again afterwards and reached a very high level of 34% in 2012.

Figure 21: Trends in perceived tensions between men and women, Turkey and EU28 (%)



Notes: Lower bounds not completely reliable due to low number of observations. Q25: In all countries there sometimes exists tension between social groups. In your opinion, how much tension is there between each of the following groups in this country? (c. Men and women). Scale 1–3. Percentages are those reporting a lot of tensions.

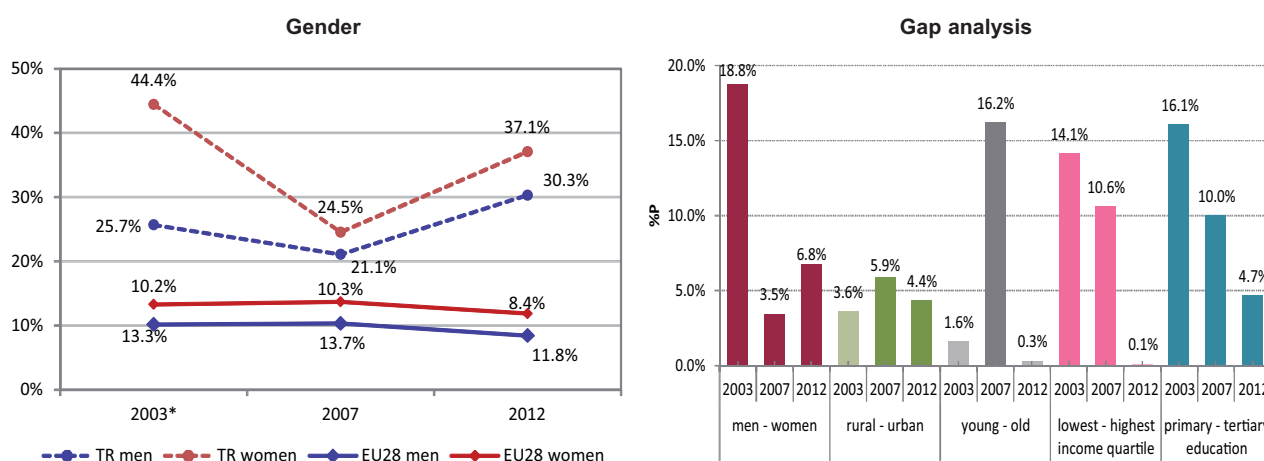
Source: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

Looking at group differences in Turkey for those perceiving a lot of tensions, we find that from 2003 to 2012 tensions between men and women were perceived to be much higher by women, with tensions first decreasing but later rising again for both sexes. Rural and urban areas followed a similar development pattern, although tensions were clearly higher in urban areas in 2007 and 2012. These tensions fell initially, but later rose, across all age groups; in 2007, tensions between men and women were temporarily much lower for older people.

Differences regarding gender tensions in Turkey were reported to have declined from 2003 to 2007 for all income groups but (in contrast to EU trends) increased again afterwards, especially for those with higher income. Regarding education, while people with a higher education level reported continuously growing tensions between men and women, tensions perceived by those with a low education decreased before rising again.

By 2012, most of these differences had disappeared. The highest gap remained in terms of gender (with women feeling higher tensions than men), followed by education and living area: those with a higher level of education and urban dwellers reported more tensions.

Figure 22: Trends in perceived tensions between men and women



Note: Charts shows percentages perceiving a lot of tension.
Source: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

In November 2013, the EU Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, Štefan Füle, met the Minister of Family and Social Policies, Fatma Şahin, in Istanbul. As well as discussing recent Turkish reform efforts aimed at the improvement of women's rights and gender equality, they participated in a conference on 'Progress in women's human rights' where the Commissioner, in his speech on women's rights and gender issues, said:

Women's rights and gender issues have been of paramount importance to this country ever since the foundation of the Republic. These issues are crucial to all Turkish citizens irrespective of their gender, and for the modernisation of Turkish society. No bird can fly on one wing. No society can advance if half of its members are less than fully part of decision making, educational achievement and the labour market.

Štefan Füle (2013)

The Commission spoke about past Turkish efforts to ensure women's better, full and legitimate participation in society, such as the establishment of a Parliamentary Committee on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women in 2009, the extension of the right to 16 weeks of paid maternity leave to many public servants, as well as awareness raising and training in gender issues for public servants and health personnel. He also mentioned projects on the promotion of female

employment, supporting female entrepreneurship and the promotion of gender equality in working life, which were realised through the instrument of EU pre-accession assistance.

Commissioner Füle invited Turkey to endorse targets of the Europe 2020 strategy and to translate them into gender-specific national targets. He made a point of stressing the need for sustained efforts to increase women's political participation, access to education and more active involvement in the labour market, highlighting the following four main areas (quoted from his speech):

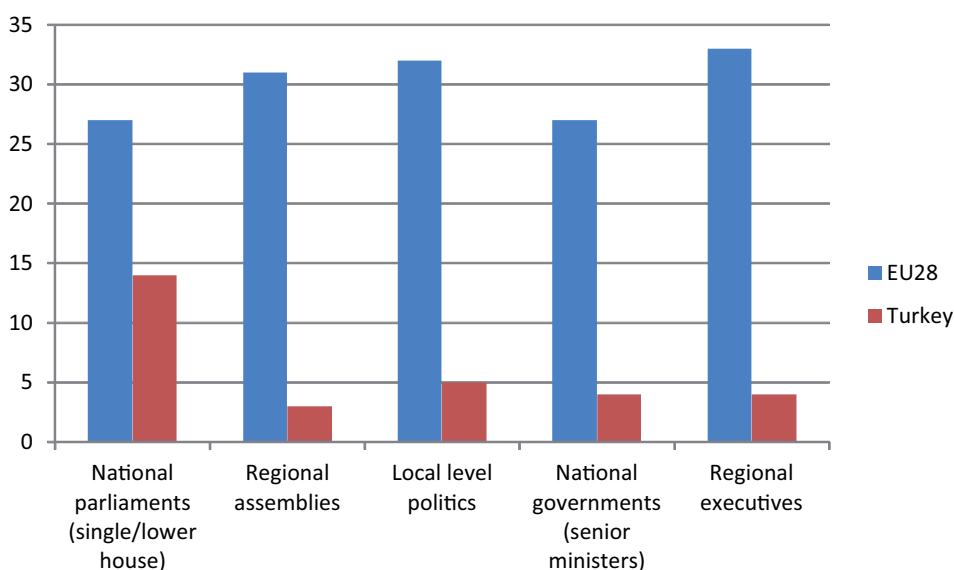
- establishing an anti-discrimination and equality board to mainstream gender equality in the legislative process, as part of the democratisation package;
- achieving tangible results in the area of women's inclusion in politics;
- making every possible effort to close the gender gap in education, especially in the southeast of the country, where it remains significant;
- closing the gender employment gap by adopting adequate policies to create the conditions for women's access to employment.

The next section investigates these areas, using data from the EQLS surveys, thereby allowing for new insights into trends and recent developments in these four important fields of gender equality.

Women's inclusion in politics

Political participation allows citizens to contribute to decision-making, to voice concerns and to decide on important national and local strategies and directions. In Turkey, women's inclusion in politics is rather limited (though it has been increasing in recent years), both at national and local level. The European Commission's database on women and men in decision-making (European Commission, 2013d) shows that Turkey has a lot to catch up on, when compared to the EU28 average.

Figure 23: *Political representation of women in Turkey 2013 (%)*



Source: *European Commission (2013d)*

Recent years have brought improvements, however, even if women members in decision-making political bodies are still far from the ‘gender balance comfort zone’ (this is between 40% and 50% – the percentage between which female participation would be seen as equal to that of men). The 2013 report on gender balance in decision-making bodies (European Commission, 2013f) shows that the percentage of women in national parliaments in the EU28, on average, increased from 22% in 2003 to 27% in 2013. In Turkey, their share, while lower, also increased; this may be a result of voluntary party quotas.

While only at 4.4% in 2002, the share of women parliamentarians increased to 9.1% in 2007 and to 14.4% in 2011. Representation of women in local administration remains more limited but has also improved over the years. In the election of 2009, 27 out of 2,948 mayors (0.9%) in total and two out of 81 mayors at provincial level were women. According to 2014 election results, 37 out of 1,351 (2.7%) mayors in total and four out of 81 mayors at provincial level were women (ABGS, 2014).

Nevertheless, the situation in Turkey is seen to be quite challenging, especially by women’s networks facing local elections scheduled for spring 2014 and upcoming general elections in 2015 (TAIEX, 2013). The European Commission’s 2013 progress report on Turkey underlines this by stating that while, ‘legislation and action plans continue to be implemented ... further sustained work is needed to turn legislation into political, social and economic reality’ (European Commission, 2013a, p. 14). Actual implementation and practical enforcement is low. Political representation at all levels remains a challenge. There are only 14.3% female representatives in the Turkish parliament and the situation at local level is even more challenging with, for example, only 4.5% female representatives of municipal councils and 1% of female mayors (TAIEX, 2013).

Access to education

Turkey has significantly expanded access to education in the last decade. Nevertheless, major challenges remain on two key fronts: quality and equity (World Bank, 2013a). According to the OECD:

While in most OECD countries more girls than boys go to school in the 15–19 year-old age group, the enrolment rate in Turkey is 6 percentage points higher for boys (67%) than for girls (61%).

(OECD, 2013f)

Eurofound (2007) found that education levels in Turkey in 2007 were continuously rising, at all levels, but that differences in access to education – not least related to access to private education – remained significant. Provided that the state would continue to fund the rising demand for education, it was expected that higher rates of education among young people would gradually raise education levels among the adult population.

Changes in the education system

Up to 1997, only five years of primary school education (starting at the age of six years) was legally mandatory for all children. If their parents chose to do so, children could continue their education at a state-owned secondary school (the Imam-Hatip schools), where there was a focus on the teaching of Islam. First established in the late 1940s, these schools were intended as vocational schools for educating the Islamic clergy. However, from 1950 onwards, their numbers increased steadily. Furthermore, when they began admitting female students, who could not pursue a mosque-related career, they became more than vocational schools: they now catered for all parents who wanted their children to have a religious education.

After 1997, the duration of primary education was extended to eight years, which was to be completed without a break. This meant that students could no longer attend the Imam-Hatip religious schools at the lower level of secondary school.

In 2012, the system was completely overhauled once again and the so-called ‘4+4+4 model’ was introduced. Core primary education was reduced to four years. After completing this first stage, students – at least in theory – can choose between one of three alternatives: vocational schools (other than religious ones); religious schools; general education schools. The second and the third stages are also fixed at four years each. Furthermore, the starting age for primary schools was brought down to 66 months (5.5 years) with the possibility of starting at 60 months (five years) with parental consent. This means that a student can start religious schooling at nine years of age.

All of these changes brought about widespread criticisms and protests but were nevertheless put into effect.

Ranking and attendance

Regardless of the system involved, Turkish students have been performing well below average in international tests. For example, Turkish students ranked 44th among 65 societies in mathematics performance according to the latest PISA scores (OECD, 2012b). Scores attained in reading and sciences were similarly low.

Currently, according to the Turkish 2012 Household Labour Force Survey recently disclosed by TUIK, 58.4% of women and 61.4% of men between the ages of 15 and 19 years are attending school. Although higher than in 2009, these figures are well below the OECD average (83.7%). Of the 2.5 million young people in Turkey not attending school, two million have only completed primary education (eight years), while the rest of this group have not finished any level of schooling. Yet compared to 2009, Turkey has made significant progress in educating young women: the proportion of young women who are at school and not in the labour force has risen from 50% to 54%, compared to an increase from 50% to 51% for young men ((Gürsel et al, 2014b).

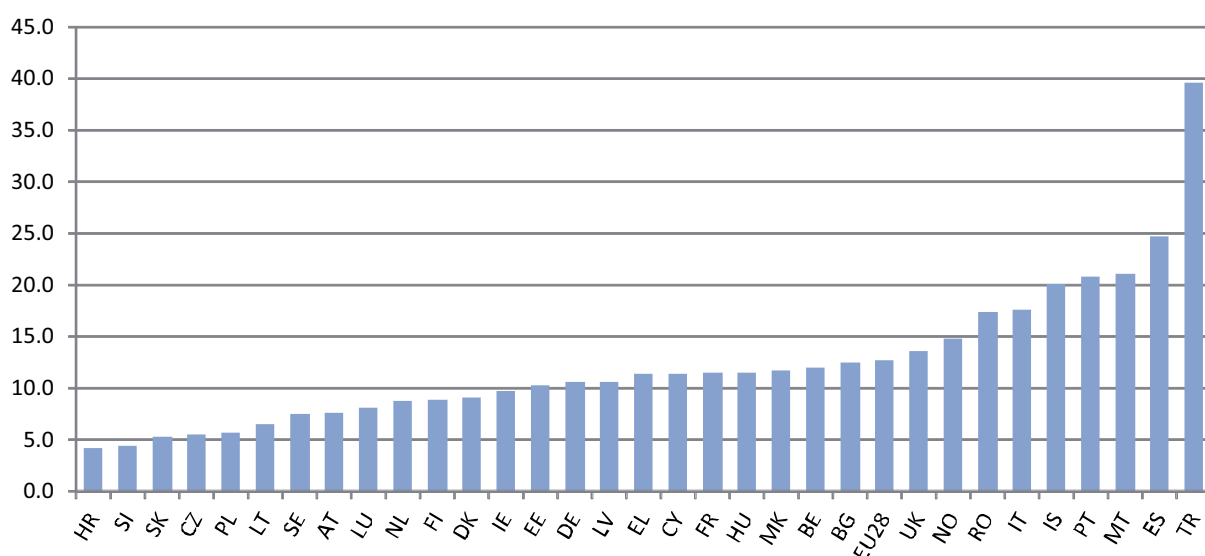
Nevertheless, the proportion of young women and men not in employment, education or training (NEET) has not decreased. The fact that 1.4 million people between 15 and 19 years are outside both the school system and the labour force calls for emergency policy measures (Gürsel et al, 2014b).

Gender gap in education

In recent years, there has been progress regarding women’s access to education in Turkey, with enrolment rates for girls constantly rising since 2010 and fewer girls leaving school early. Not least due to the government’s 2003 ‘Let’s go to school’ campaign, the gender gap in primary education has declined. However, gender differences in access to education remain sizable in some regions, especially in the southeast of the country. Füle notes, ‘The female early school leaving rate remains ... four times higher in Turkey than in the European Union, and low enrolment in secondary and tertiary education remains a major obstacle to Turkish women’s educational attainment’ (Füle, 2013).

In Europe, most people spend a significantly longer time in education than the legal minimum requirement, yet one in seven children leave school or training early. With large dropout rates likely to impact not only on individuals but also on society and economies (Eurostat, 2014c), recent EU initiatives encourage longer schooling – for example, the European Employment Strategy and a European Commission Communication on tackling early school-leaving (European Commission, 2011b). So too do initiatives by the Turkish government. As a result, the share of female early school-leavers declined from 55.6% in 2006 to 43% in 2012. For young men, it declined from 41.3% to 36.1% during the same time. Nevertheless, the share of early school-leavers in Turkey (including those not wanting to work) remains much higher than in EU28 countries.

Figure 24: Early school-leavers in the EU by country, 2012 (%)



Note: Shows population aged 18–24 years. Figures include those who are employed, those who would like to work, and those not wanting to work.

Source: Eurostat (2014c)

The above findings have been confirmed by the World Bank (2013b, p.23) and TUIK data, which identified that about 35% of those aged 15–29 years in Turkey were NEET in 2010, while the OECD average amounted to only 16%. The OECD report finds that the high rate is mainly driven by young women (45%) and that while the share of young men who were NEET peaks at 20–24 years, the proportion of young women who are NEET continues to grow, with many not making the transition to legal, paid work (OECD, 2013f).

NEET rates in Turkey vary significantly with level of education. The transition from school to work can be quite challenging, particularly for young adults without upper secondary education. However, those with university degrees also find it difficult to match their skills with labour market needs (OECD, 2013f).

Satisfaction with quality of the education system

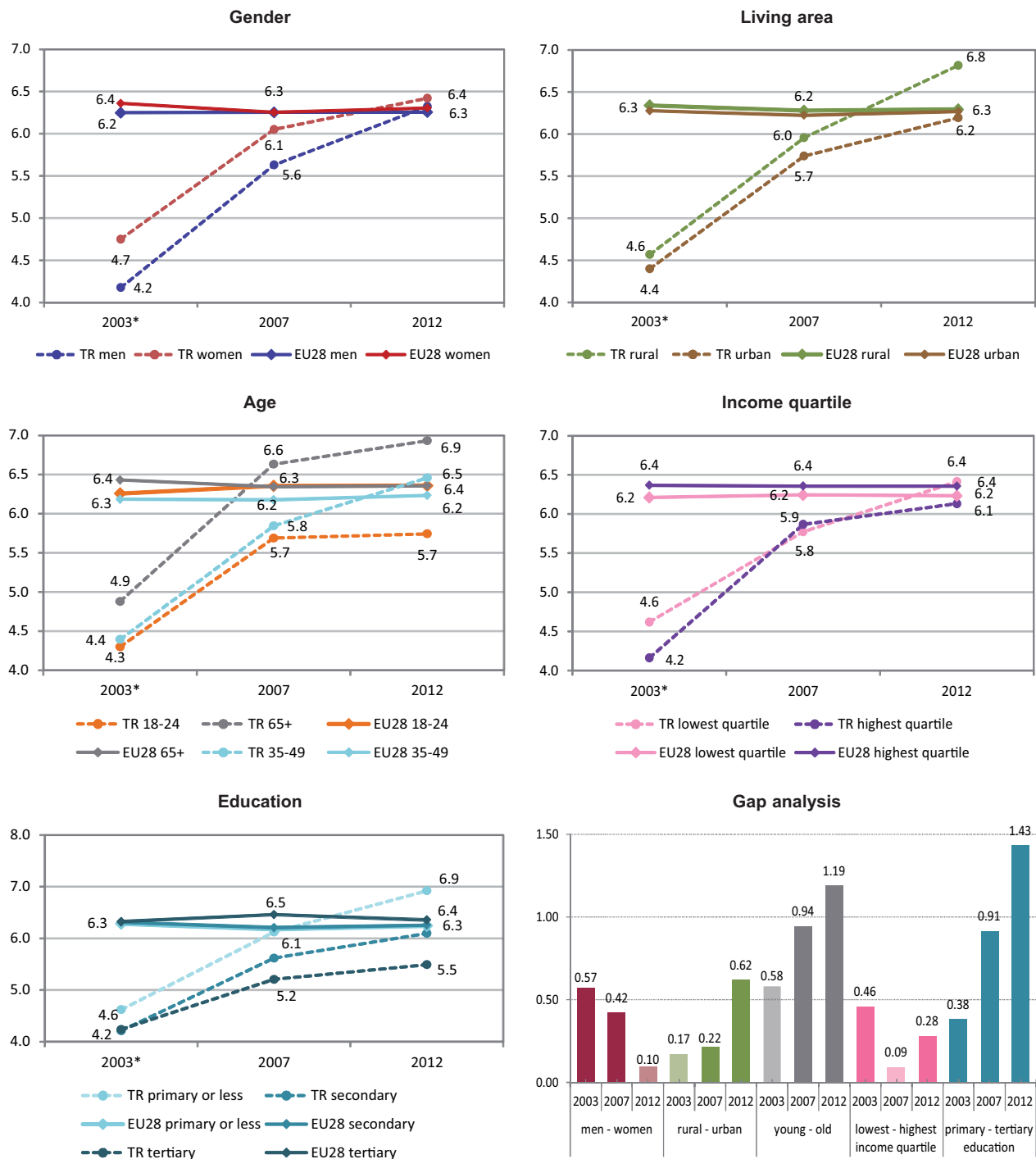
Despite these difficulties and controversies, EQLS data show significant increases in satisfaction with the education system. While respondents in 2003 evaluated the quality of the Turkish education system at only 4.5 on a 10-point scale, perceived quality rose to 6.4 in 2012. While the EU28 average satisfaction level remained constant, the rate for Turkey rose from the lower EU28 range to just above its average (see Figure 25).

EQLS data also provide information on satisfaction with the quality of the education system for different groups in Turkey between 2003 and 2012. It shows this was higher for women across all three years. While it increased for both genders, this was less so for women from 2007 to 2012, so that by 2012 the gender gap had disappeared. Satisfaction was also higher in rural areas and increased more for rural than urban dwellers, which resulted in increasing rural–urban differences in satisfaction.

Regarding age, satisfaction with the quality of the education system was highest for the oldest age group (65 years and over). For all age groups, satisfaction increased strongly between 2003 and 2007, and more moderately between 2007 and 2012. Younger people show the lowest satisfaction level, with no changes from 2007 to 2012.

Satisfaction is generally lower for high-income earners in Turkey, while the opposite holds true for the EU28. For this group, an increase in satisfaction levels tapered off, which might be explained by the fact that initial reform-related improvements were not followed by other potential improvements.

Figure 25: Trends in satisfaction with quality of education system (1–10)



Source: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

Satisfaction for low-income earners increased throughout the period. An interesting point raised in this context was that all satisfaction-related questions seem correlated to approval ratings for a particular government or support for ruling parties. Data from the 2008 European Values Study in Turkey, for example, indicates that while 47% of those voting for the ruling AKP said they had a ‘great deal of confidence’ in the country’s system of education, the corresponding proportion was only 29% among supporters of the main opposition party (EVS, 2009).

Satisfaction was highest and increasing for those with a low education level. A higher level of education seems to reduce satisfaction levels. This might be because better educated people tend to expect more and can be more critical. Finally, while gender-related and income-related differences decreased regarding satisfaction with the quality of the education system, education-related and location-related differences increased.

Between 2007 and 2012, both men and women increased their (self-reported) level of education. While higher for men in both Turkey and the EU28, EQLS data reveal interesting age differences for highest education level. Measured on a 0–6 scale, with 3 representing mid-level (upper secondary) education, in the EU28, the highest education level in 2012 was found among those aged 30–39 years (4.16 for men and 3.99 for women). In Turkey, the highest education level was found in the youngest age group (18–29 years), with men at 3.09 and women at 2.67. This indicates Turkey's success in improving access to education, and shows that Turkey is catching up with the EU in this regard.

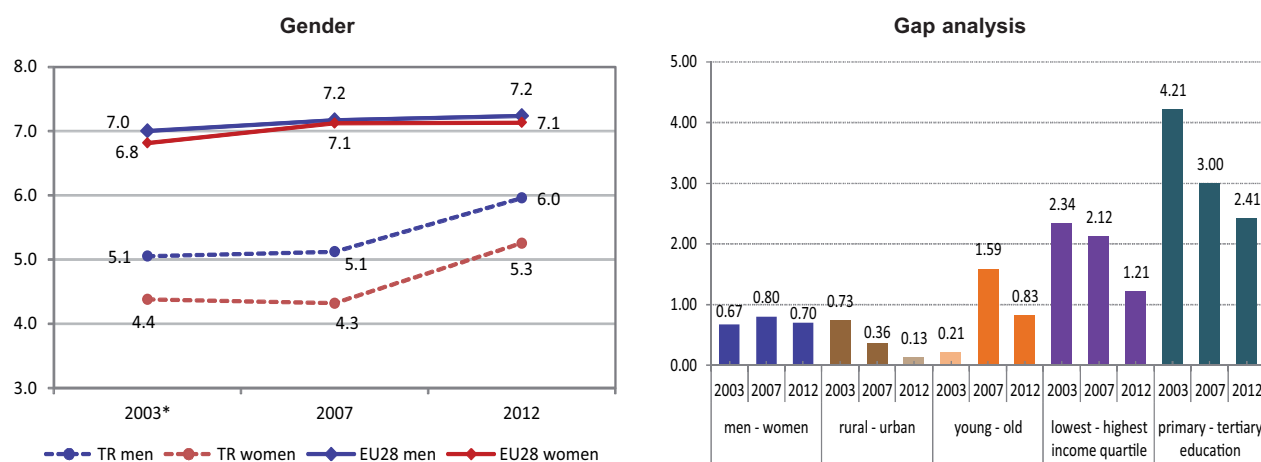
Satisfaction with one's own education

Between 2007 and 2012, satisfaction with respondents' own education remained rather low in Turkey, much lower than the EU28 average. Increases from 2007 to 2012 somewhat reduced the gap, though it remains large: 5.6 in Turkey compared to the EU28 average of 7.2.

The EQLS analysis for 2003 to 2012 in Turkey reveals the following.

- Satisfaction with education was constantly higher for men. Women showed similar improvements, but at a lower level.
- Satisfaction was initially higher in urban areas, but slightly stronger increases in satisfaction in rural areas eliminated this difference in 2012.
- Satisfaction increased for young people after 2003. Levels among middle-aged people and older people strongly increased after 2007.
- It was also reported to be higher for those with higher income. However, while it increased only slightly for those with high income, it grew more noticeably for those in the lowest income quartile. There was a slight decline in satisfaction across all income groups in 2007.
- Gender does have an impact, but the biggest variations are caused by income and education levels. In 2012, those with a better education, those on a higher income, older people and men all reported being significantly more satisfied with their education.
- With satisfaction with education in Turkey below the EU28 level, it is clear that more improvements are needed.

Figure 26: Trend in satisfaction with own education



Source: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

Gender employment gap and access to the labour market

Although Turkey has ‘always lagged behind comparable countries in international gender equality rankings due to (its) low female labour force participation rates’, increasing numbers of Turkish women have gained access to the labour market and started to work in paid employment (Uysal-Kolasin, 2012).

As a result, female labour force participation in Turkey has been increasing, with striking improvements in female employment, especially regarding the regular employment of middle-aged and low-educated women who previously worked in the home (Gürsel et al, 2014a). Data released by TUIK show these positive developments: female labour force participation increased from 23.3% in January 2005 to 29.1% in April 2012, with temporary stagnations related to the recent economic crisis from early 2005 to late 2007 (Uysal-Kolasin, 2012).

Four factors have led to this increase: people with a higher education postponing retirement; a steady increase in the labour force participation of secondary school graduates; added worker effects; and the above-mentioned increase in the participation of low-educated, middle-aged urban women (Gürsel et al, 2014a). Interestingly, the added worker effect, with more women temporarily entering the labour force to compensate for expected job losses of men during the crisis, was small. Instead, the majority of women have started to work as formal (registered) wage and salary earners, some as casual workers. Accordingly, the pool of female labour not only increased but did not decline again after the crisis, resulting in permanent additions to the labour force. In the same period, the share of ‘inactive’ women working in the home decreased (Uysal-Kolasin, 2012).

TUIK’s Turkstat data indicate that the majority of female job increases occurred in the service sector, especially in ‘administrative and support services’ as well as ‘accommodation and food services’. ‘Wholesale and retail trade’, ‘education’ and ‘human health and social work activities’ were the main fields of growth (Gürsel et al, 2014a).

Gender employment gaps in Turkey remain large. Despite recent increases in the average retirement age, with a significant impact on labour and employment growth for university graduates (Gürsel et al, 2014a), more ‘comprehensive policies that integrate education, tax incentives for female employment, childcare subsidies and paternity leave are crucial in surmounting obstacles to labour market entry for women’ (Uysal-Kolasin, 2012). As pointed out in the TAIEX workshop (2013), these are important preconditions for female employment and engagement in public offices and politics.

Working conditions also matter. Most workers in Turkey are employed in small enterprises. As pointed out by the European Commission’s 2013 progress report on Turkey, a large proportion (40%) of the Turkish labour force does not enjoy full protection under labour law due to high levels of informal employment and insufficient enforcement of such regulations. Common problems detected by the report are ‘long working hours with no overtime pay, non-respect of weekly rest, unjustified dismissals, and restrictions on using annual leave and benefitting from severance payments’. Child labour also remains an issue, with 6% of children aged 6–17 years involved in an economic activity (European Commission 2013a, p. 39).

As pointed out by the Turkish Ministry for EU Affairs:

According to article 71 of Labour Law number 4857, children aged 15–17 have been defined as young employees and may be employed in wage earning works. There have been 292,000 children aged 6–14 who are defined as child labourers. The employment rate of them is 2.6%. The employment rate of children aged 15–17 is 15.6% and they are defined as young employees.

Informal work in Turkey is generally more widespread for women, across all sectors. With 30% of total female workers in 2012 consisting of informal, unpaid family workers in agriculture, women's access to formal employment, particularly in rural areas, should be encouraged. Legal frameworks guaranteeing women's rights and gender equality are already in place. Turkey should thus 'make sustained efforts to turn legislation into social, economic and political reality, along with the necessary change in mentality' (Füle, 2013).

Unemployment remains a significant problem. Even at times of healthy economic growth, unemployment rates in Turkey have remained high. For example, non-agricultural unemployment rates (although decreasing) varied between 13.5% in January 2005 and 11.3% in January 2012, with a peak of 16.9% in January 2009, at the height of the economic crisis. Needless to say, youth unemployment rates have been significantly higher, approaching 20% from time to time (TUIK, 2014).

As a recent World Bank report points out, job losses in the 2008 crisis mostly 'hit men in urban areas' (particularly in formal manufacturing jobs), 'while women, youth and the low educated saw lower earnings – women gained jobs through the business cycle while wage inequalities increased' (World Bank, 2013b, p. 39f). Not surprisingly, job losses were higher in urban areas, with those in rural areas being able to resort to agriculture.

Work–life balance

The concept of work–life balance describes a state of equilibrium between an individual's work and personal life. In Turkey, family networks provide a lot of the necessary social services such as childcare, and care of older people. Rural families often resort to informal care within the family, while others use informal (often live-in) migrant workers. Those in formal, gainful employment who need to balance their professional and private lives tend to be better educated and have a good income; as in many other countries, they find ways to combine work and other obligations, often through paid support.

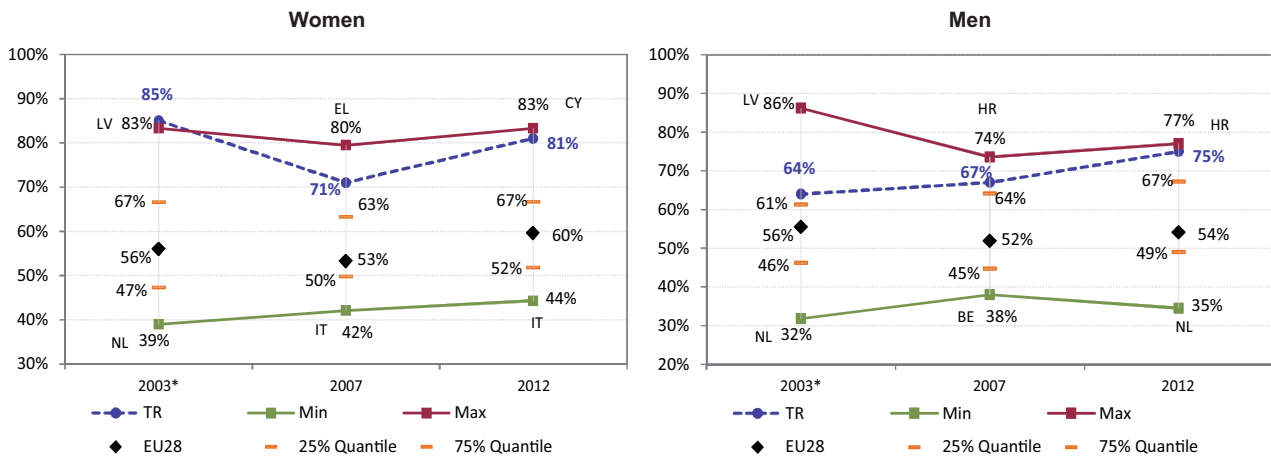
With a large part of the population in informal employment, many restricted to their households and only 30% of women in gainful employment, work–life balance is difficult to examine in Turkey. When investigating work–life balance in Turkey, it is necessary to be quite careful about the underlying situation.

High and increasing work–life conflict

EQLS analysis shows that 'strain-based conflict' plays an important role in Turkey. This occurs 'when stress or tiredness from one domain spills over into the other, creating an overlap between family and professional spheres' (Eurofound, 2010b, p.42).

Turkish employees and self-employed people, men and women, show high levels of strain-based conflict, much higher than the EU28 average. Unfortunately, the data only cover those holding jobs in the formal economy, but it is not unlikely that this also applies to other workers.

Figure 27: Trends in work–life conflicts (%)



Sources: *EQLS 2003*; *EQLS 2007*; *EQLS 2012*.

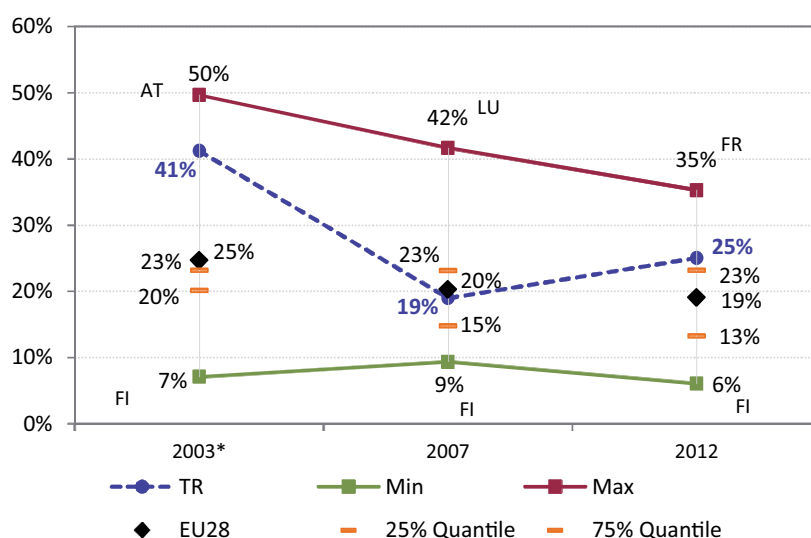
From 2003 to 2012, the share of women facing work–life conflict increased in the EU28. Countries with the highest levels were Latvia, Greece and Cyprus, but conflict also increased in countries with relatively low rates of work–life conflict. In 2012, Turkish women faced less strain-based work–life conflict than in 2003. Following positive developments up to 2007, the share of Turkish women (holding a formal job) facing such conflicts later increased again. In 2012, it was close to the rates of countries with a relatively high rate of work–life conflict.

Compared to Turkish women, men seem to be faced with lower but continuously increasing work–life conflict. The share of Turkish men facing this grew from close to the EU28 ‘inner cone’ in 2003 to nearly the highest rates among EU28 countries in 2012. Reasons might include the increasing employment rates of women and higher work demands of the growing Turkish economy. At the same time, the rate of work–life conflict among men decreased slightly in the EU28, although during and after the economic crisis there was an increase in country-based differences in the rate of work–life conflict in the EU28.

Gender equality in everyday life

In 2003, more than 40% of respondents in Turkey thought that they did ‘more than their fair share’ of housework. Compared to the EU28 average, this was a rather high percentage. While this rate fell later in the decade, before increasing again, the EU28 rate has declined throughout the period. In 2012, the rate was 25% in Turkey, compared to the EU28 rate of 19%.

Figure 28: Trends in doing more than fair share of housework (%)



Notes: Q38: Do you think that the share of housework you do is... 1 More than your fair share, 2 Just about your fair share, 3 Less than your fair share.

Sources: *EQLS 2003*; *EQLS 2007*; *EQLS 2012*.

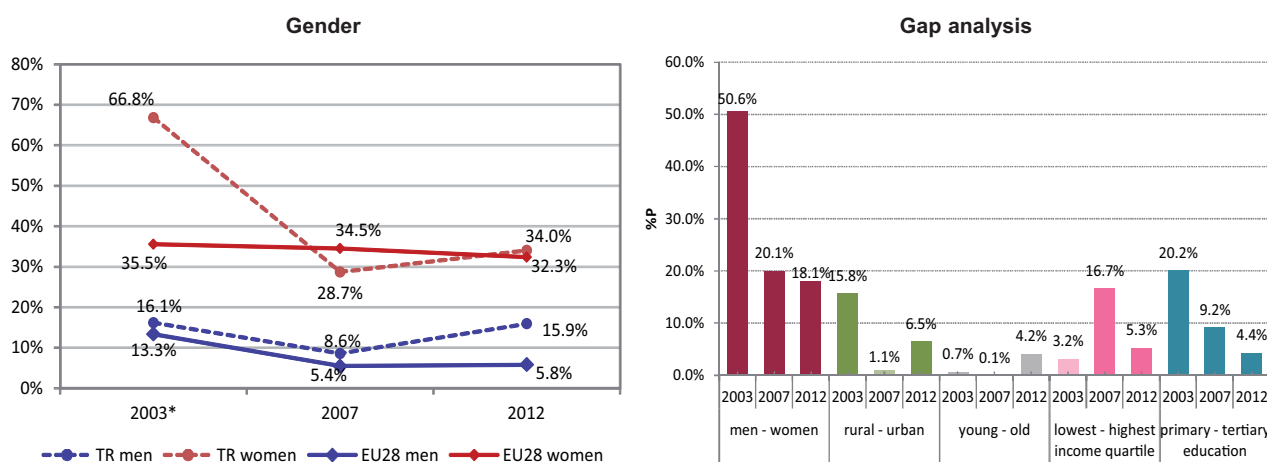
From 2003 to 2012, the share of those reporting that they do more than their fair share of housework in Turkey was much higher for women, even if the high proportion of 67% reported in 2003 dropped to 29% by 2007 and reached just 34% in 2012 – still over double the rate of men for that year (16%).

The share reporting doing more than their fair share was also higher in urban areas in 2003 and 2012, although there was no significant difference here in 2007. It fell for both locations from 2003 to 2007 but later increased again, even if only to lower levels. Regarding age groups, it was highest for the middle-aged (35–49 years) both in Turkey and the EU28. Older and younger people in Turkey did not exhibit significant differences, although the share of those over 65 years who felt they contributed more than their fair share rose slightly after 2007.

People on a low income perceived a more unfair division of housework than those on a higher income, though the rate declined for both groups. The rate of those feeling they do more than their fair share was higher for those with a lower education level, at its lowest point in 2007, followed by increases for all educational groups by 2012.

Gaps were highest (but declining) for gender, followed by income and education (both with falling trends). While education was no longer significant in 2012, rural–urban differences re-appeared. Gaps between older people and young people were not significant.

Figure 29: Proportion doing more than fair share of housework (%)



Note: Shows percentage responding with 'more than fair share'.
Sources: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

Summary and policy pointers

Between 2003 and 2012, women's perception of tensions between men and women declined while that of men increased. This gender difference was at its lowest in 2007. The share of those reporting a lot of tension remained higher than the EU28 average. In 2012, people in urban areas and people with higher education reported greater tension.

Women's inclusion in politics remains very low both at local and national levels. Despite there being more women in parliament in 2013, the situation concerning gender equality – especially at municipal level – needs more attention. Sustained efforts to increase women's political participation are needed. This is also the case regarding labour market participation, which is expected to trigger female political activity by bringing women out of private households.

Satisfaction with the quality of the Turkish education system increased and shows a decreasing gender gap, which disappeared in 2012. The analysis shows an increasing difference between urban and rural dwellers, driven by strongly increasing satisfaction among rural dwellers. Satisfaction among young people, by contrast, has stagnated, resulting in an increase in age-related differences. Satisfaction among people with a lower education strongly increased over time, reflecting satisfaction with recent reforms. Nevertheless, Turkey has a very high number of early school-leavers – a fact that needs tackling in order to provide a well-educated labour force for the future. This is a particular issue among girls.

Satisfaction with education increased for both men and women. The gender gap on this issue has not changed in the last 10 years: men remain more satisfied than women. Throughout the period, satisfaction with education also remained higher for those in the highest income quartile and those with a higher level of education, even if the gaps are decreasing.

Increasing numbers of Turkish women have started to work in paid employment. Despite consistent and accelerated increases in female labour force participation and employment after 2008, the gender employment gap in Turkey remains large. It seems that more comprehensive policies focusing on integrating education, promoting formal work, tax incentives and childcare would improve the situation.

Strain-based work–life conflict, the negative spill-over between family and work, visibly increased for men between 2003 and 2012, for whom it remained noticeably higher than the EU28 average. For women, who are also well above the EU28 average on this issue, rates of work–life conflict first declined in 2007, and then, in 2012, almost returned to 2003 levels.

The share of those feeling they do more than their fair share of housework halved from 2003 to 2007, rising a little in 2012. This is mainly due to fewer women reporting they do more than their fair share, while the rate among men has remained more or less constant. Urban dwellers on a lower income or with a lower education level were more likely to report doing more than their fair share of housework.

Family life and support networks 5

In more traditional societies, where there are greater levels of family contact, a lower welfare state provision and often less formalised work – the case of many southern European countries – family networks and support play an important role, not only in times of crisis but also in everyday life. Although Turkey has undergone modernisation at a fast pace, with heavy migration flows into cities and the creation of new industrial zones in recent decades, it seems that family networks still play an important role.

The average household size in Turkey fell from 4.5 persons in 2000 (population census) to 3.8 in 2011. In the same year, one-person or two-person households accounted for 30% of all households, while the corresponding figure was only 19% in 2000 (TUIK, 2013). Clearly, the Turkish family structure has been undergoing significant change, moving closer to the European average. Nevertheless, the traditional family, with its underlying support systems and solidarity and loyalty networks, is still very much intact. Numerous surveys (for example, the World Value Survey, the European Values Study and the European Social Survey) attest to the fact that family is by far the most trusted institution in Turkish society. In many cases, the main functions of a welfare state are carried out, or at least shared, by the family. Thus, despite much lower average income levels than major American and European cities, it is almost impossible to come across homeless people living on the streets of Istanbul, as that would bring huge disgrace and shame on the person's extended family.

This chapter investigates the extent of family and non-family contacts in Turkish society, support networks and community life. It also looks at how unpaid work is shared within families.

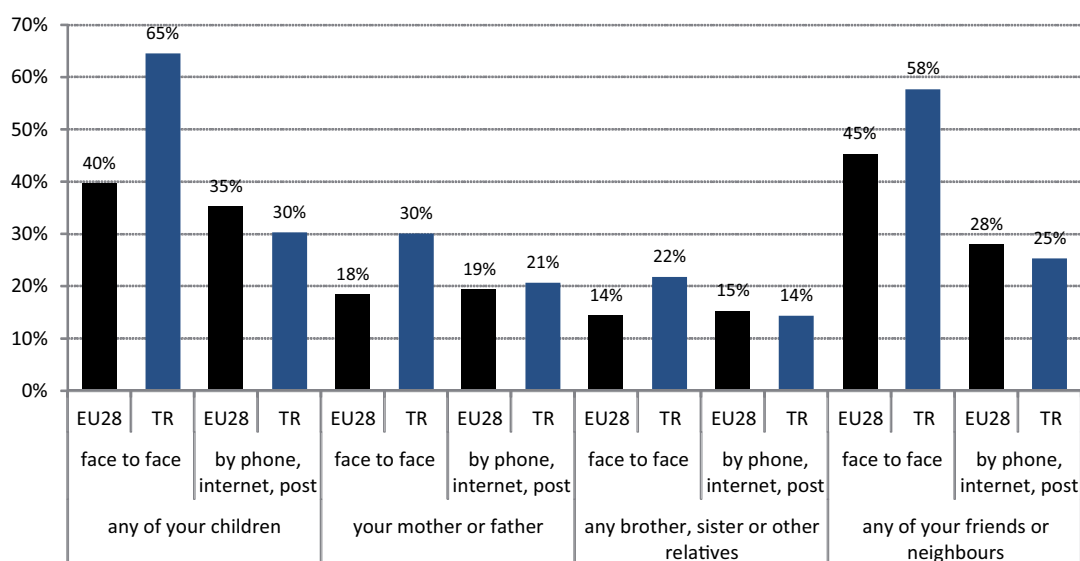
Family contacts

Although 90% of the Turkish population today possess a mobile phone (BTK, 2013), face-to-face contact with family, friends and neighbours remains an important everyday social activity. Face-to-face contact is highest for children, friends and neighbours, with six out of 10 people reporting personal contact every day or almost every day. The extent of face-to-face contact with parents, siblings or relatives exceeds the EU28 average.

Rates for daily (or almost daily) contact by phone, internet or post are similar to the EU28 average figures. Again, they are highest for children, friends and neighbours. At above EU28 rates, this seems to also complement the (by Turkish standards) relatively lower extent of face-to-face contact with parents, siblings and other relatives.

If both types of contact are considered together, and assuming that it takes place either face-to-face, by phone or internet, nearly 95% of the Turkish population report daily (or almost daily) contact with their children, while 83% report having such contact with friends and neighbours. Half of them report daily (or almost daily) contact with their parents and more than one-third (36%) with their siblings or other relatives. EU28 average rates are 75%, 73%, 38% and 30% respectively, all lower than those for Turkey. The biggest difference between EU28 rates and those for Turkey is found for contact with children and parents, indicating stronger and longer-lasting core family ties.

Figure 30: Family contact every day or almost every day (%)



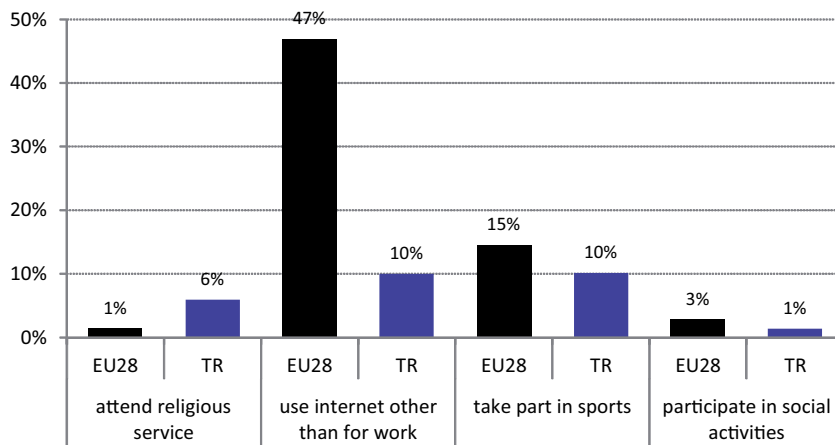
Notes: Q33: On average, thinking of people living outside your household how often do you have direct face-to-face contact with...? Q34: And on average, how often do you have contact with friends or family living outside your household by phone, the internet or by post? Scale going from 1 (every day or almost every day) to 5 (never).
Source: *EQLS, 2012*.

Leisure time activities

With paid work the central and often main daily activity for many in EU countries, leisure time has become precious. Although labour market developments throughout the crisis may have changed this for some, with many out of work, spending adequate time with family and friends and on recreational activities remains a central preoccupation.

In Turkey, where contact with family and friends is more intensive, behaviour and perceptions are a little different. Looking at activities people report doing every day or almost every day, we find that in Turkey the share of those attending a religious service is much higher than the EU28 average. By contrast, the proportion taking part in sports or other social activities of a club, society or an association is lower than the EU28 average. With more intensive family contact, there might not be time for other social activities. On the other hand, volunteering in Turkey is still low (Figure 41), which might prevent local activities such as sports or club-based social activities being offered in the first place.

The share of those reporting daily use of the internet (other than for work) amounts to only one-fifth of the EU28 rate. One reason might be lower access to the internet at home. A more active family life might also prevent people from spending their time outside work online.

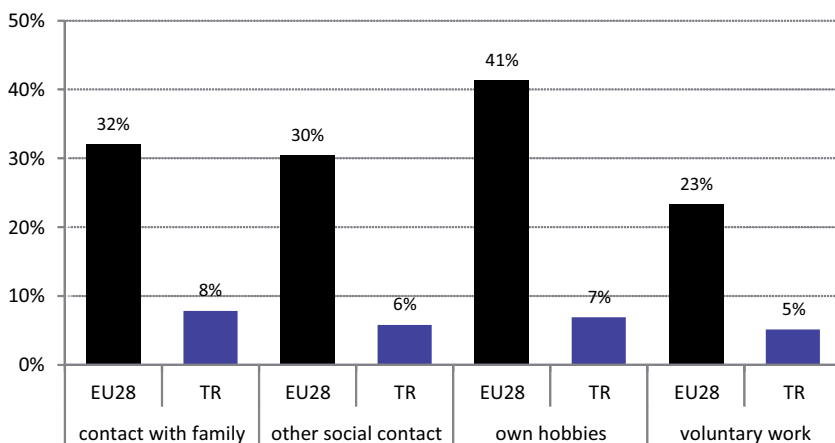
Figure 31: *Leisure time activities (%)*

Notes: Q21: How frequently do you do each of the following? Scale going from 1 (every day or almost every day) to 5 (never, 98). Shows % responding 'every day or almost every day'.

Source: *EQLS, 2012*.

Few respondents in Turkey want to spend more time with their family, while one-quarter would like to spend less time with their family. Close family bonds and traditionally high levels of family contact might be too restrictive for younger people, for example. Saturation effects – how much more time an individual can spend with their family – might also play a role. In the EU28, where people have less family contact, the situation is reversed: reconciling family life with work obligations has become a huge issue for a large part of the population.

Unlike the EU28, where people seem to feel increasing work–life conflict, only a small proportion of people in Turkey want to spend more time on social contacts, hobbies or voluntary work.

Figure 32: *Unmet leisure time preferences (%)*

Notes: Q39: I am going to read out some areas of daily life in which you can spend your time. Could you tell me if you spend as much time as you would like to in each area, or if you wish you could spend 'less time' or 'more time' in that activity? Scale going from 1 (spend less time) to 3 (spend more time). Shows % want to spend more time.

Source: *EQLS, 2012*.

Sharing of household tasks within families

Unpaid household tasks include cooking and housework, caring for one's children and grandchildren as well as caring for older or disabled relatives. While in 2012, unpaid involvement in care was higher in Turkey than in the EU28, the proportion of people cooking and doing housework on a daily basis, or at least several days a week, has decreased.

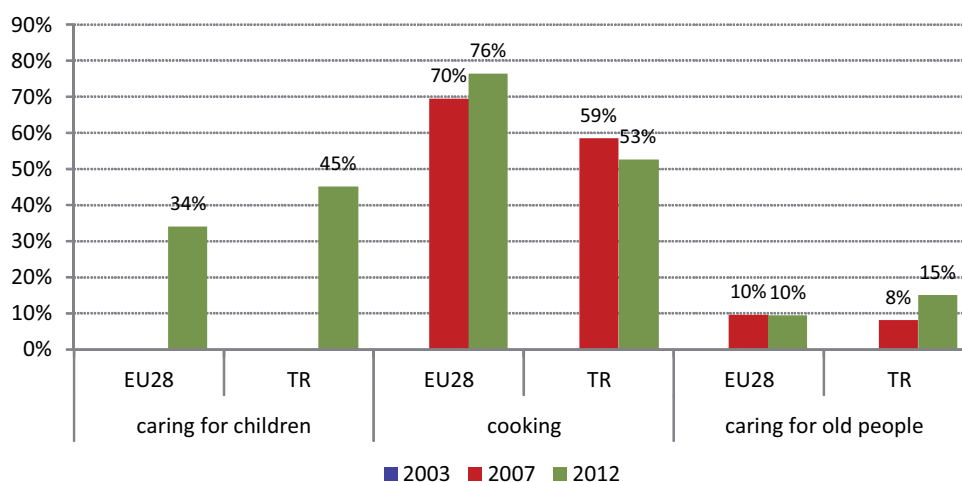
Around 90% of women in Turkey and the EU28 report that they cook and do housework daily or at least several times a week. Men show distinctly different behaviour and trends. The share of men doing such tasks in Turkey decreased from above one-quarter in 2007 to less than 16% in 2012, while in the EU28, it increased from 50% to 60%. Still higher in urban areas in Turkey, rates of involvement in daily cooking and housework among both men and women is declining in both urban and rural areas. Younger people tend to do less and the biggest decreases are found among them. With male engagement in housework thought to reflect growing gender equality in European homes, developments in Turkey point to growing inequality in the private sphere. This might be an outcome of Turkish policy in the last decade, where traditional family roles have been emphasised and encouraged by government authorities; this has included encouraging families to have more children and to avoid abortion. It is not surprising that some segments of the population have heeded these messages.

In 2012, women in Turkey looked after their children and grandchildren to a greater extent than men. Nevertheless, more men in Turkey (34%) engaged in this role every day or several days a week than men in the EU28 (29%). In contrast to the EU28, Turkish people in urban areas (46%) tend to care for their children and grandchildren more frequently than those in rural areas (42%). Those over 65 years (22%) tend to care for offspring more often than young people (12.5%). It is not unexpected that male urban dwellers care for children more than male rural dwellers. The greater involvement of older people occurs because 'caring for children' includes looking after grandchildren. Not only are older people much more likely to take care of their grandchildren, in Turkey they are expected to do so.

Caring for older people or disabled people continues to be a role occupied by women more than men, both in Turkey and the EU. Rates of involvement have been rising in Turkey for men and, even more strongly, for women, reaching 20% for women and 10% for men in 2012, compared to EU28 rates of 10% for women and 7.5% for men.

Analysing this theme by location, frequent engagement was higher among rural dwellers (12% in 2007) and stayed more or less at this level, while the share of urban dwellers caring for older or disabled people grew strongly, from 5.5% in 2007 to 16.5% in 2012. This can be partly explained by increasing urbanisation, with the migration of rural and thus more traditional families into cities: urban centres are becoming more 'rural', culturally at least.

Figure 33: *Involvement in unpaid household activities (%)*



Notes: Q36: In general, how often are you involved in any of the following activities outside of work? Scale goes from 1 (every day) to 5 (never). Shows percentage responding every day or several days a week.

Sources: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

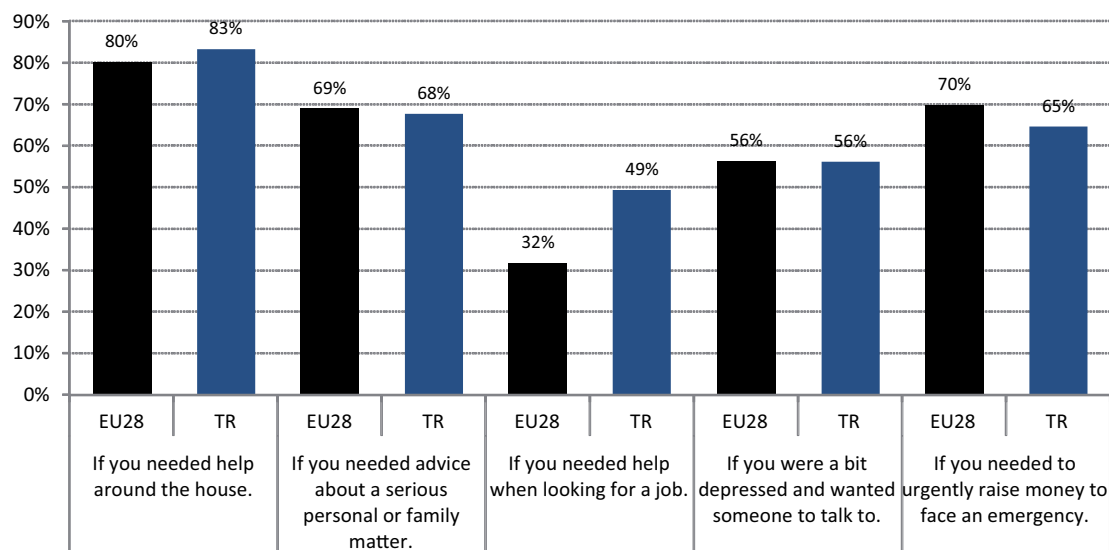
Support networks

Support networks are important in everyday life but especially in times of crisis. With Turkish family life an important part of daily life for most, it is likely that support will mainly come from this source. The hypothesis is that Turkey, like southern European countries, relies a lot on informal social capital (family and informal social support) rather than welfare services, or in addition to them (Pichler, 2007).

Asked from whom they would expect to receive support if needed, people perceived family to be the most dominant source of support, both in Turkey and the EU28. Examples of such situations include help around the house when ill, advice on serious personal or family matters, help when looking for a job, wanting someone to talk to when feeling a bit depressed or needing to urgently raise a large amount of money.

EQLS data reveal that when looking for work, people in Turkey resort to family to a much higher degree than people in the EU28. Institutional job-seeking support is a lot less common in Turkey and many jobs still belong to the informal sector, where the filling of vacancies usually relies on informal contacts and networks. Within a context of extended families and traditional networks (such as those created when people migrate to an urban centre from the same area), people regard it as their duty to find formal or informal work for family or network members.

Figure 34: *Support from family and relatives (%)*



Notes: Q35: From whom would you get support in each of the following situations? For each situation, choose the most important source of support. Shows percentage who chose a member of family or relative.

Source: EQLS, 2012.

In 2012, family remained the main source of support in all matters in Turkey. The difference between Turkey and the EU28 in this regard can be summarised as follows.

- Fewer people expect institutional support, especially when looking for a job or urgently needing to raise a substantial sum of money.
- Friends and neighbours are twice as important when an individual needs to raise money. This might result from a high degree of labour market informality, which does not result in declared income and thus negatively affects access to banking credit (Gürsel et al, 2013a).

- Fewer people feel that they have nobody to turn to when looking for work or when needing substantial funds: only one-tenth of respondents in Turkey felt they were without support in looking for work, compared to one-fifth of people in the EU28.

Table 7: *Perceived sources of support (%)*

		Family	Friends	Institutions	Nobody
If you needed help around the house	EU28	80.2	13.5	3.9	2.4
	TR	83.3	11.2	2.1	3.4
If you needed advice about a serious personal or family matter	EU28	69.0	24.0	3.9	3.1
	TR	67.7	25.2	1.4	5.7
If you needed help when looking for a job	EU28	31.7	25.1	22.5	20.7
	TR	49.3	29.2	10.2	11.3
If you were a bit depressed and wanted someone to talk to	EU28	56.3	35.6	2.8	5.3
	TR	56.1	37.4	1.8	4.7
If you needed to urgently raise money to face an emergency	EU28	69.8	12.1	8.3	9.7
	TR	64.6	24.9	3.4	7.1

Source: *EQLS 2012, Q.35*

Summary and policy pointers

In Turkey, close family contact is much more common than in the EU28. Six out of 10 respondents reported daily face-to-face contact with children, friends and neighbours. However, more time spent on family activities results in less time for sports and participation in other social activities.

A higher proportion of people in Turkey than in the EU28 attend religious services almost every day.

Although 90% of the population possess mobile phones, internet use is much less lower than in the EU28.

While reconciling work, leisure and family life has become an issue for many in Europe, one-quarter of respondents in Turkey would actually like to spend less time with family.

Family involvement in caring for children and older people is higher in Turkey than the EU28. While men in the EU28 increasingly engage in cooking and household work, the share of Turkish men reporting involvement in such tasks has declined. Gender equality needs strengthening in both the private and public spheres.

Family remains the main source of support in case of need, both in Turkey and in the EU28. In Turkey, this is especially true regarding finding work, which seems related to the large informal economy but also to the fact that less institutional support is available.

Friends and neighbours are twice as important in Turkey than they are in the EU28 when an individual urgently needs to raise money but also in the search for work. More formal jobs with regular income could improve the situation.

Developments in social cohesion 6

This chapter deals with the quality of relations in society, with a focus on social cohesion. Social cohesion has to do with the social bonds that bring people together and make them feel socially included in society. Social cohesion at societal level is measured first by trust in other people and in institutions and secondly by the perception of tensions between different social groups. Social inclusion is measured at an individual level by participation in civil society and volunteering and by feelings of freedom and inclusion in the society. Taken together, these indicators can show the level of social cohesion at both macro and micro levels in order to paint a general picture of the quality of society (Abbott and Wallace, 2012).

Trust in people

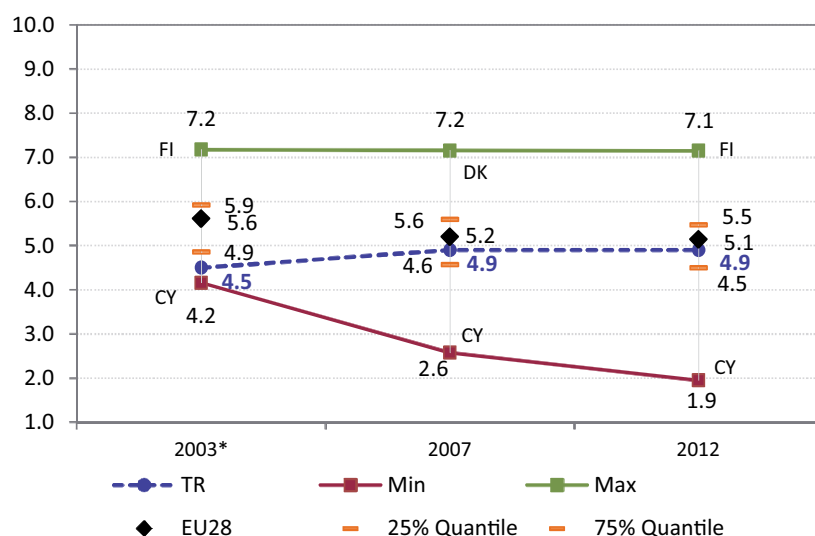
Trust in other people was found to be unexpectedly low in Turkey, lower than one would expect it to be in a country with traditionally close and strong family ties. However, EQLS data show increasing levels of trust in other people between 2003 and 2012, rising from 4.5 (on a 10-point scale) in 2003 to 4.9 in 2007, a level close to the EU28 average and where it remained until 2012. This is quite a positive development at a time when trust in people in some European countries (especially Cyprus) strongly decreased, often triggered by the economic and financial crisis. (Trust in other people did remain high in some countries like Spain, and even increased in others, like Greece.)

Other sources indicate consistently low trust in people in Turkey, even lower than the rates found in the EQLS surveys. The last European Social Survey (ESS), with data for 2008, shows a very low mean value for trust in people (2.34 on a 10-point scale). The European Values Study (EVS) uses a dichotomous scale for that question: ‘most people can be trusted’ versus ‘you cannot be too careful in dealing with people’. It indicates that since 1999 only around 10% answered the question positively.

An explanation for low trust in Turkey might be that while reliance on and trust within families is high, those outside close family bounds are regarded with some wariness and caution. A research paper based on round five of the World Values Surveys (WVS) conducted between 2005 and 2008 (Delhey and Welzel, 2012) confirms this. While in Turkey, in-group trust is high (that between family, neighbours, people known personally), out-group trust is low (that for people met for the first time, of another religion, of another nationality). This reduces overall levels of trust in people.

The World Values Survey also points to generally low trust in people in Turkey (Mendrano, 2014). When asked in 2007 if ‘most people can be trusted’ or if ‘you need to be very careful in dealing with people’, the overwhelming majority of respondents chose the second, putting Turkey (together with Trinidad, Tobago and Rwanda) at the bottom of countries world-wide in trust in people. Yet, with the exception of Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland as well as six other countries, all countries fell below the equilibrium index (where the share of trusting people corresponds to that of those not trusting).

Figure 35: Trends in trust in people (1–10)



Notes: Q24: Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people? Scale from 1 (you can't be too careful) to 10 (most people can be trusted).

Sources: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

The EQLS reveals that from 2003 to 2012, trust in people in Turkey was higher for men than women. Gender gaps first widened but later decreased. In 2012, the Turkish gender gap matched that the EU28 average. Trust in people was lower but improving in Turkey while it decreased for the EU28.

Trust in people was initially higher in rural areas in Turkey, though it strongly decreased among rural dwellers from 2007 to 2012 while increasing among urban dwellers. By 2012, the gap had changed direction, having grown similar in size to the EU28 average, with higher trust in people reported in urban areas.

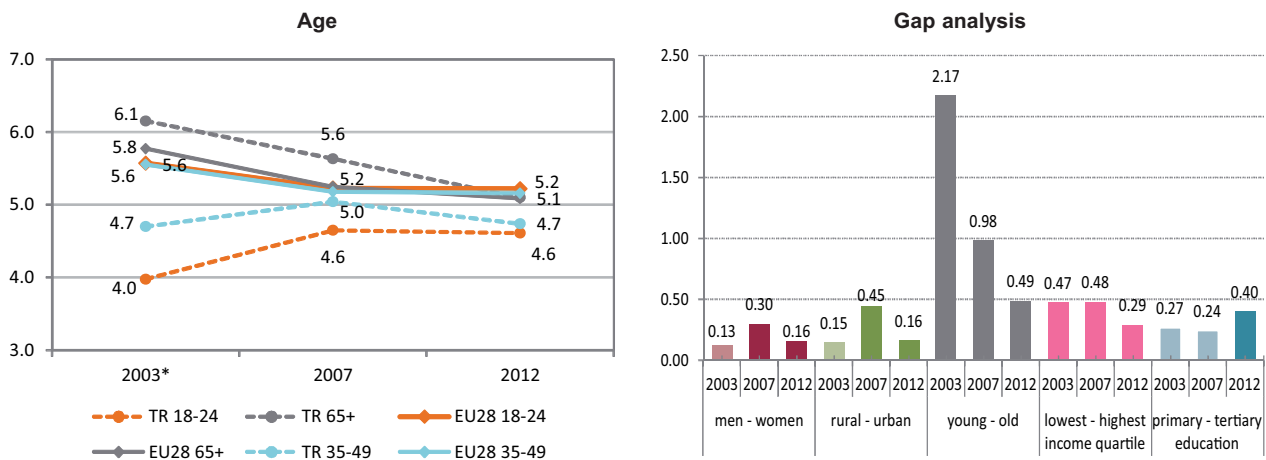
Regarding age, trust in people was much higher among older people. However, age groups show convergence over time, both in the EU28 and Turkey. The Turkish age gap was much larger but decreased over time. Older people in Turkey showed higher levels of trust than people in the EU28, though the rate among them was falling. By contrast, younger people were much more sceptical; trust levels among this group increased between 2003 and 2007, and then remained constant.

Regarding income, trust in people remained higher for the highest income quartile. While initially increasing for all, it later remained constant for the lowest income quartile while it fell for the highest income quartile, thus resulting in decreasing income gaps.

Education became significant in 2012 only, with those with only primary or lower education exhibiting increasing and greater trust than those with secondary or tertiary education.

Differences in trust in people were largest but declining for age, with older people losing trust over time. Other age-related differences were small or not significant. While income became a less decisive factor, education seems to have an increasing impact.

Figure 36: Trends in trust in people (1–10)



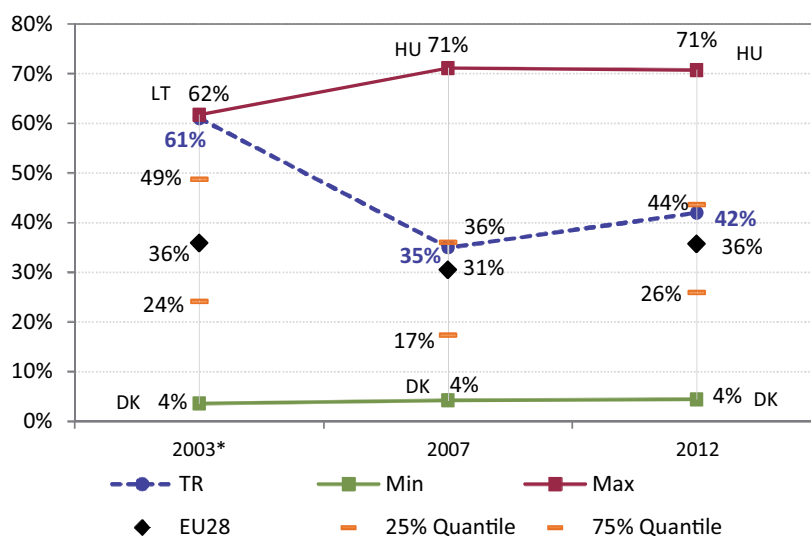
Sources: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

Perceived tensions between rich and poor

While tensions between rich and poor people in EU28 countries (with low rates of perceived tensions) remained more or less constant, tensions in EU28 countries with high tension rates were perceived to have increased over time. It is interesting to note that perceived tensions increased before (and not during or after) the economic crisis. The rate of perceived tensions in the EU28 declined from 36% in 2003 to 31% in 2007 but regained its original level in 2012.

In Turkey, tensions between the poor and the rich follow a different pattern. While the share of those perceiving a lot of tensions nearly halved between 2003 (61%) and 2007 (35%), it increased again by seven percentage points between 2007 and 2012. This development is likely to be a consequence of increasing unemployment rates in 2008 and 2009. Since 2007, Turkey's position when measured against the EU28 quartile range has fallen. Within the EU28, there are growing similarities between 'inner-cone' countries.

Figure 37: Trends in tensions between poor and rich people (%)



Notes: Q25: In all countries there sometimes exists tension between social groups. In your opinion, how much tension is there between each of the following groups in this country? (a: poor and rich people). Shows percentage perceiving a lot of tensions.

Source: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

Tensions between other groups

Perceived tension between management and workers, although originally much higher than the EU28 average, decreased between 2003 and 2012. Now within the EU28 ‘inner cone’, rates rose slightly between 2007 and 2012, when the share of those perceiving a lot of tension amounted to 37%.

Perceived tensions between older people and younger people declined strongly between 2003 and 2007 but were later reported to have risen again. Although lower than in 2003, Turkey remained above the EU28 average in 2012 on this issue. More women (31%) than men (26%) reported feeling intergenerational tensions; otherwise, socioeconomic differences were not significant.

Perceived tensions between religious groups increased from 2007 to 2012, with 34% perceiving a lot of tension in 2012. Differences were significant for age, income and education: the share of young people reporting a lot of tensions (44%) was higher than the share of older people reporting this (32%). People in the lowest income quartile (39%) and with tertiary education (43%) perceived greater tensions.

Perceived tensions between racial or ethnic groups decreased considerably between 2003 and 2007, then increased again; in 2012, these tensions were reported by 40% of respondents, which was still much lower than in 2003. Just above the EU28 average in 2003 and 2012 on this issue, trends in Turkey are similar to those in the EU28. The average EU28 share of people perceiving a lot of tensions declined from 44% in 2003 to 37% in 2012. While overall quite favourable, EU developments from 2007 to 2012 are a little worrying since tensions are increasing among countries at both the lower bound, such as Bulgaria and Latvia, as well as the upper bound, such as the Czech Republic. Although the crisis might have contributed to this, growing tensions foil the efforts of European cohesion.

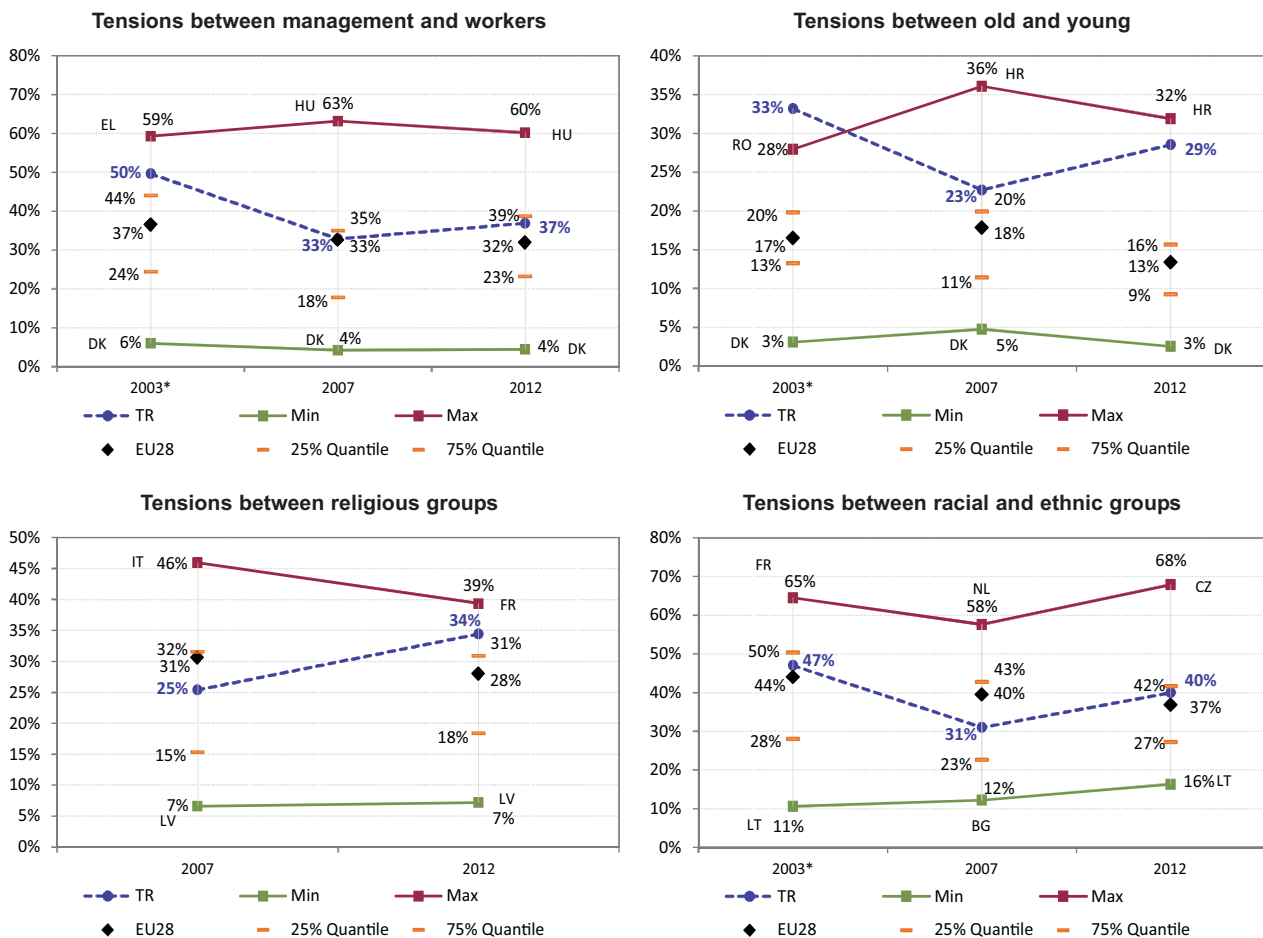
In 2012, tensions in Turkey related to sexual orientation (44%), income (42%) and race or ethnicity (40%) were perceived to be higher than those between management and workers (37%), men and women (34%), religious groups (34%) and older and younger people (29%).

Trust in institutions

According to the OECD, a cohesive society is one ‘where citizens have a high degree of confidence in their governmental institutions and public administration’ (OECD, 2013b). The OECD Better Life index shows that in 2012, some 57% of people in Turkey said they trust their political institutions, a figure close to the OECD average of 56%.

EQLS data on trust in institutions are only available for 2007 and 2012. Given recent developments in Turkey, it is interesting to see that trust in government – while falling from 2007 to 2012 – is much higher than the EU average, and is very close to EU countries with the highest trust in Europe. While trust in the police remained more or less stable in both Turkey and the EU28, trust in the legal system declined, all over Europe.

Figure 38: Other fields of tension (%)



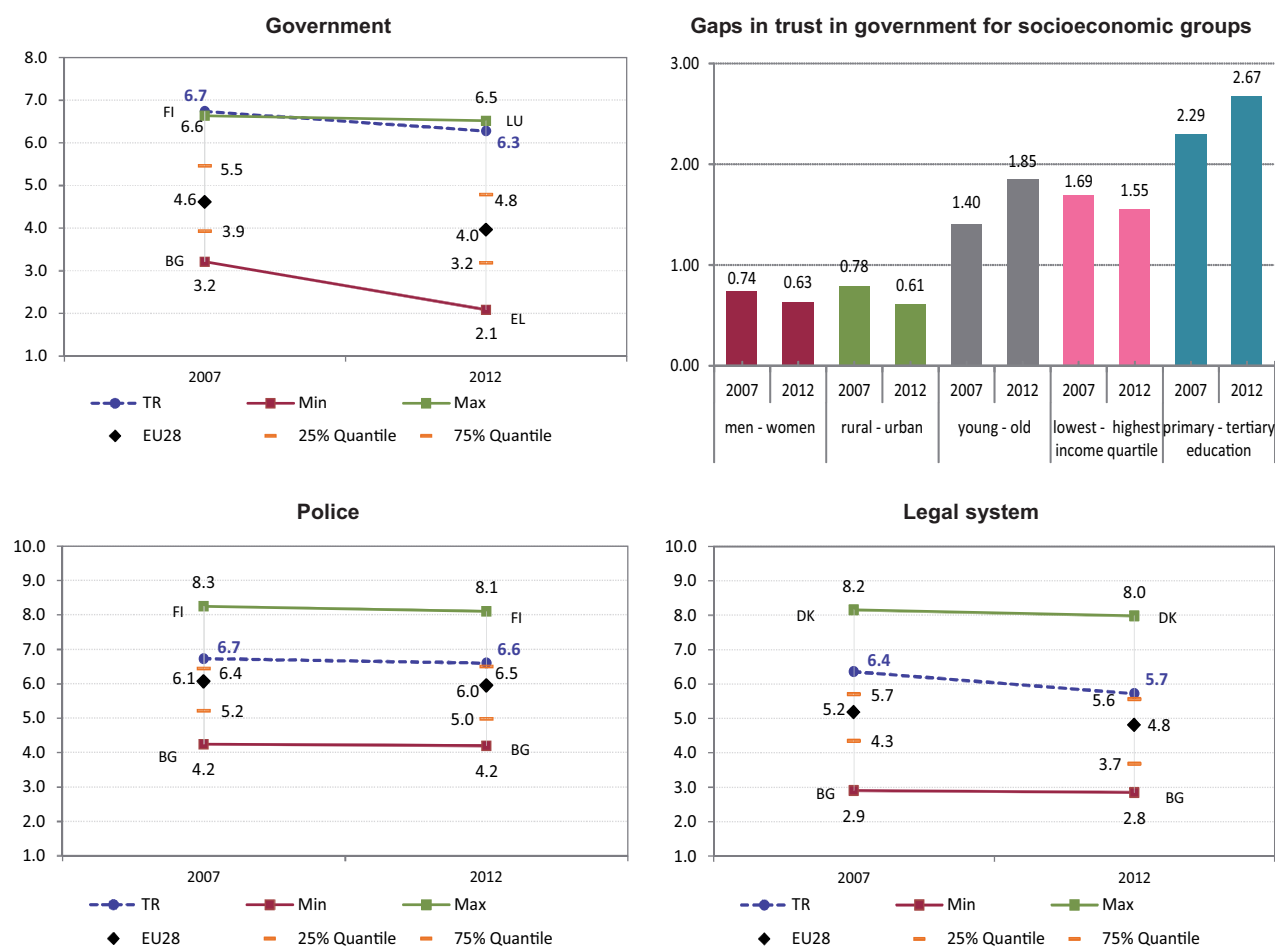
Notes: Shows percentage perceiving a lot of tension. Lower bounds not completely reliable due to low number of observations.
Source: *EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012. Q25*

EQLS data reveal that for all institutions tested (the parliament, the legal system, the press, the police, the government and the local authorities), trust is higher among women, rural dwellers, older people, those on a lower income and those with a lower education. Although slightly varying in size, effects are mostly consistent over time and across institutions. Trust in government, for example, was reported to be declining for all socioeconomic groups, with gaps in gender, living area and income getting smaller, while those related to age and education visibly increased from 2007 to 2012 (see Figure 39).

The analysis also showed the following between 2007 and 2012:

- trust in the press was low but increasing for most groups, with younger people, those in the highest income quartile and people with third-level education the least trusting, and becoming decreasingly trustful;
- trust in local authorities was highest for older people and those with primary (or lower) education;
- trust in police was low and declining for people in the highest income quartile and those with third-level education.
- trust in parliament was reported to be falling for all groups.

Figure 39: Change in trust in institutions (1–10)



Notes: Q28: Please tell me how much you personally trust each of the following institutions. Scale ranges from 1 (do not trust at all) to 10 (trust completely). (b. The legal system, d. The police, e. The government)
Sources: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

Civic participation and volunteering

Although quite varied in nature and composition, civic participation has been defined as follows:

Individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern. Civic engagement can take many forms, from individual voluntarism to organizational involvement to electoral participation. It can include efforts to directly address an issue, work with others in a community to solve a problem or interact with the institutions of representative democracy.

(American Psychological Association, 2014)

Over the past decade, the World Bank has detected a huge ‘expansion in the size, scope, and capacity of civil society around the globe ... aided by the process of globalization and the expansion of democratic governance, telecommunications, and economic integration’ (World Bank, 2013c). The number of NGOs and civil society organisations has been growing, with increasing numbers of supporters, and they are having an increasing influence on the shaping of local and international public policy.

In many European countries, democratic interaction through civic participation and engagement has become an important tool and driver for public decision making at local, national and even EU level. It is seen as a means of demanding government action on social issues but also of speaking out against the government.

In Turkey, levels of civic participation vary. While voter turnout is high in international comparison (OECD 2013b), volunteering is low (ICP, 2012; UNDP, 2013). Political engagement and attendance at demonstrations or protests has also been low, at least up until before the Taksim events in summer 2013. However, volunteering and political engagement are growing (UNDP, 2013), with increasing numbers of (young) citizens mobilised in this field.

Civic participation and political engagement

Political engagement is an important part of civic participation. It can be measured in terms of attendance at meetings of trade unions, political parties or political action groups, protests or demonstrations and (other than routine) contact with politicians and public officials.

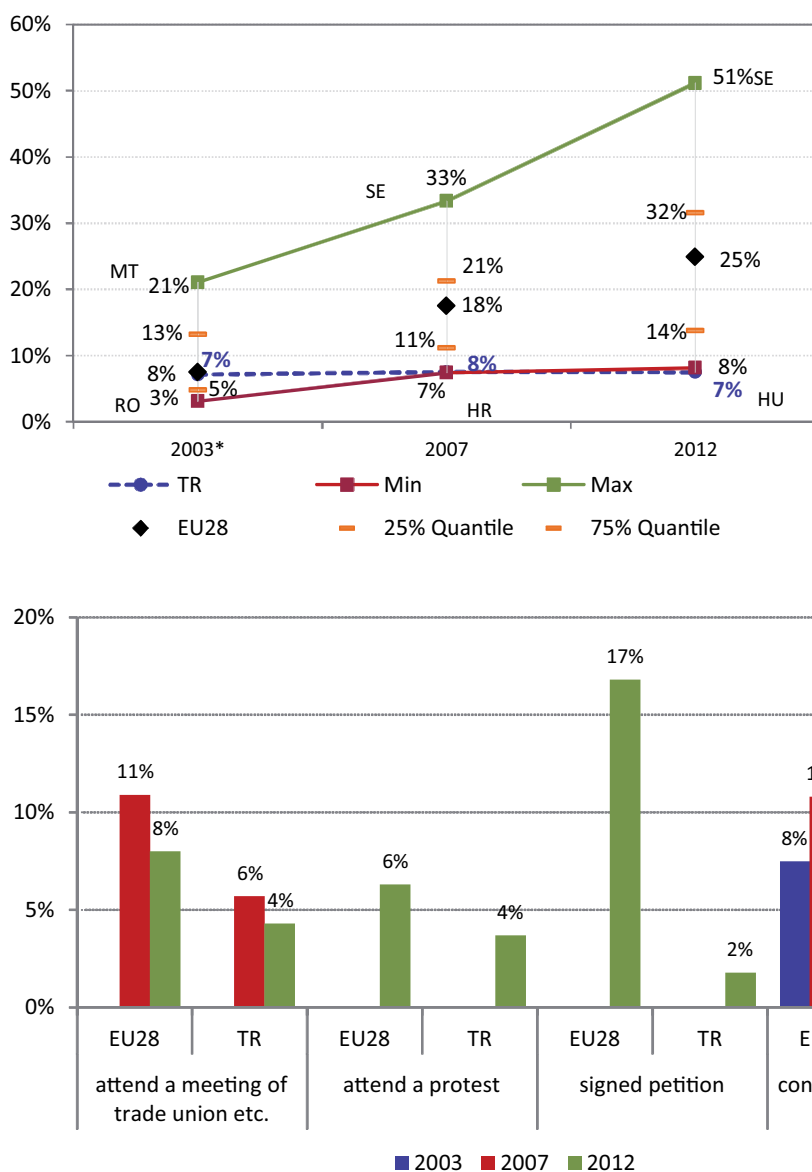
While participation (in at least one activity) increased greatly in the EU, political engagement in Turkey did not grow over time. In 2012, one-quarter of EU28 respondents were active; in Sweden (representing the upper EU bound) the share amounted to more than one-half of the population. In Turkey, on the other hand, political engagement remained low at 7%–8%. While still matching the EU28 average in 2003, civic participation in Turkey did not keep up with European trends and thus was visibly below the EU28 average in later years. Unchanged since 2003, it ranged close to the lower EU bound represented by Croatia (2007) and Hungary (2012).

A closer look at EQLS data reveals that the share of Turkish people politically active in terms of attending meetings of trade unions, political parties or political action groups decreased from 6% in 2007 to 4% in 2012. This reflected the trend for the EU28. It seems that this form of civic participation is maybe ‘old-fashioned’ and dying out, giving room to other means of political activity.

The proportion of people attending a protest or demonstration in 2012 was lower in Turkey than the EU28. Unfortunately, there are no trend data on this and newer developments (such as the events at Taksim Square in 2013–2014) have not yet been captured by the EQLS. The proportion reporting having signed a petition in 2012, either in person, by email or on the internet, is again much lower than the EU28 average. While close to the EU28 average in 2003, the share of people who contacted a politician or public official, other than for routine contact arising from use of public services, fell from 7% to only 3% in 2012.

In 2012, men were generally more active than women. Analysis of age-related or location-related differences was not possible due to the small sample size.

Figure 40: Trends in political engagement (%)



Notes: Q23: Over the last 12 months, have you ...? Shows percentage engaging in at least one activity.
Sources: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

Voluntary work

Voluntarism is the second most important type of civic engagement, seen to be very important but still somewhat underdeveloped, especially for young people, in Turkey. With challenges such as unemployment, the lack of a national youth policy and social unrest, there seems to be ‘an interest in engaging young people and going forward with the creation of a national youth policy but at the moment the main efforts are at the community level’ (ICP, 2012).

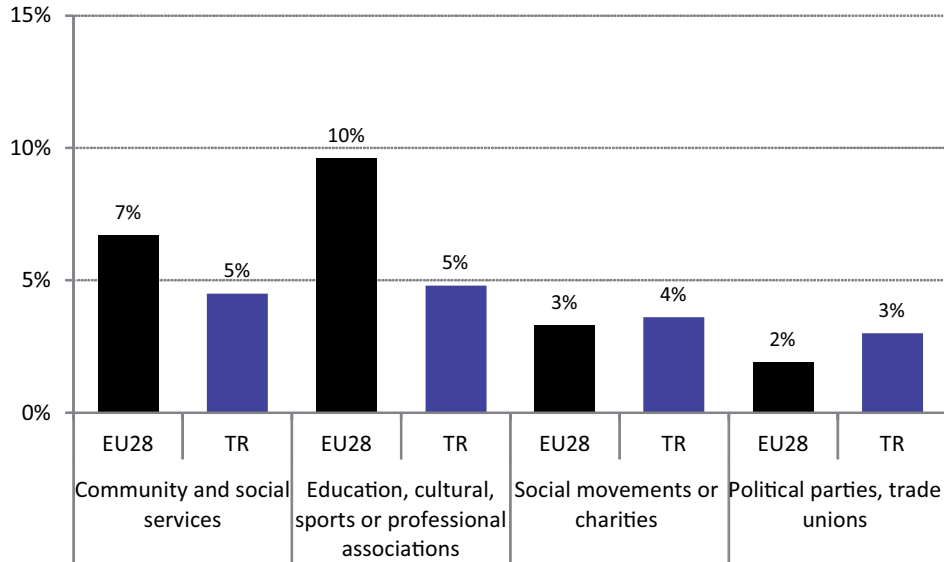
The UNDP report, *Youth in Turkey*, has identified for Turkey ‘a 15-year window of opportunity to prepare today’s youth for the challenges ahead’ (UNDP, 2008). It concludes that, while civil society organisations such as the Community Volunteers Foundation (Toplum Gönüllüleri Vakfı, TOG) and the Educational Volunteers Foundation (Türkiye Eğitim Gönüllüleri Vakfı, TEGV) have been established in the country, a lot remains to be done (ICP, 2012).

The new report from the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme, *Volunteerism in Turkey: A snapshot*, was launched at the CerModern gallery in Ankara on 5 December 2013, marking International Volunteer Day (UNDP, 2013). It illustrates that volunteerism has become an increasingly dynamic field in Turkey, with growing numbers of volunteers. Civil society and public sector institutions are also trying to mobilise people for common projects that aim to create well-being in communities and society. However, the report detects that ‘awareness and understanding of volunteerism needs improvement, more data and research on it is needed, and prevailing misconceptions about volunteering needs to be broken’. The report highlights the need for a Turkish ‘national strategy on volunteerism, policy discussions and civil society organization to be responsive to active citizens’, and encourages the ‘efficient use of new technologies for volunteering’.

Looking at voluntary work as reflected in the EQLS dataset for 2012, the following facts emerge.

- The proportion of those not doing any voluntary work in Turkey, at 80%, exceeds the EU28 average (68%) while volunteering occasionally (16%) or regularly (4%) is below the EU28 average (21% and 11% respectively).
- Voluntary work for community and social services is reported to be done by a smaller share of the population than in the EU28.
- While voluntary work for education, cultural, sports or professional associations is undertaken by only half the share of people in the EU28, work for social movements or charities as well as political parties or trade unions exceeds the EU28 average figures.

Figure 41: *Engaging in voluntary work, 2012 (%)*



Notes: Q22: Please look carefully at the list of organisations and tell us, how often did you do unpaid voluntary work through the following organisations in the last 12 months? Responses range from 1 (every week) to 4 (not at all).

Source: *EQLS, 2012*.

Voter turnout

The OECD states that ‘high voter turnout is another measure of public trust in government and of citizens’ participation in the political process’ (OECD, 2013b). According to its Better Life Index, which drew from data available for the most recent elections, voter turnout in Turkey comprised 88% of those registered, a figure much higher than the OECD average of 72%. For parliamentary elections between 1999 and 2011, for example, voter turnout in Turkey varied

between nearly 80% and more than 85%: it was 87.1% in 1999, 79.1% in 2002, 84.2% in 2007 and 83.2% in 2011 (TUIK).

Feeling included and valued in society

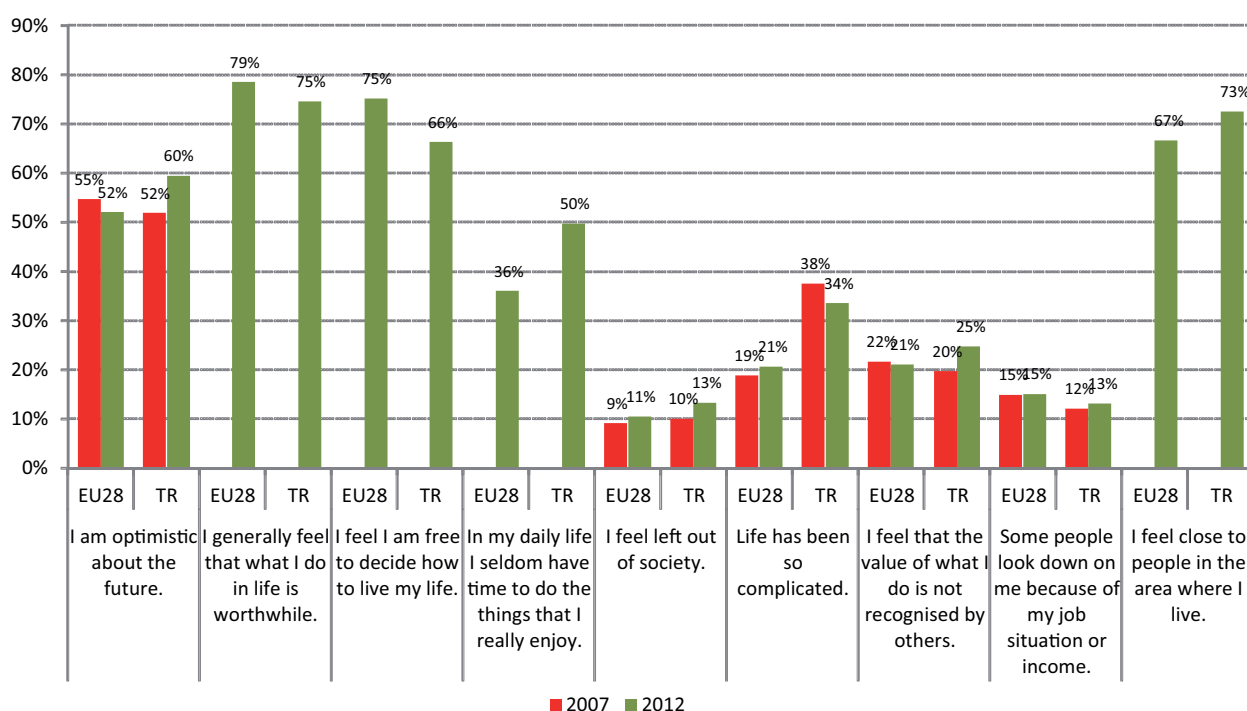
Feeling optimistic, a part of society and recognised for one's value are other important indicators of social inclusion in society. EQLS data reveal that an increasing share of people in Turkey report optimism about the future and that the proportion who think that life has become too complicated to find one's way has fallen. However, an increasing number of Turkish citizens (13% in 2012) feel left out of society. While no statistical differences can be found with respect to gender or location, age matters: older people felt more excluded than younger people.

An increase in optimism and a decrease in perceived complexity of modern life in Turkey contrasts with EU28 trends, but the increasing number of people feeling left out reflects recent EU figures. Always higher than the EU average, the share of those feeling left out of Turkish society has steadily increased over the years. In 2012, in both Turkey and the EU28, a high proportion felt that what they do in life is worthwhile, that they are close to people in the area in which they live and that they are free to decide on how to live their life. However:

- freedom to decide what to do with one's life is reported to be slightly lower in Turkey, and a higher proportion report that they seldom have enough time to do things they really enjoy;
- optimism about the future is greater in Turkey than the EU28. Six out of 10 Turkish respondents were optimistic, younger people more so than older people.

Growing feelings of exclusion are an issue, not only in Turkey but also in the EU. 'Life being too complicated' and 'no recognition for what one is doing' are the two main issues reported in the EQLS. Rates of being looked down upon due to one's job or income and feeling generally left out of society are also increasing, particularly the former.

Figure 42: *Feeling included and respected, 2007 and 2012 (%)*



Notes: Q29: Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with each statement. Shows percentage that agree and that strongly agree.

Sources: EQLS 2003; EQLS 2007; EQLS 2012.

Summary and policy pointers

Although other data sources suggest trust in people is consistently low in Turkey, EQLS findings suggest this has risen slightly between 2003 and 2012. However, a massive decrease in trust in people was observed among older people, who originally displayed the highest trust levels. Trust among young people increased between 2003 and 2007, thereafter remaining constant, which resulted in decreasing age-related differences over time. Trust in people continuously increased in urban areas while developments were less clear in rural areas. Men and people on a higher income show higher trust in people. People with low education reported higher and increasing trust while trust remained at the same level for people with a higher education level.

Tensions perceived between different groups in Turkey declined overall, though they increased slightly between 2007 and 2012. Perceived tensions were highest (and well above the EU28 average) regarding rich and poor people, even if this declined from 61% in 2003 to 42% in 2012. Tensions between racial or ethnic groups (40%), management and workers (37%) and religious groups (34%) only slightly exceeded EU28 averages. High and rising tensions between older people and younger people may need to be monitored.

Trust in government, police and the legal system was always higher in Turkey than the EU28, even if it slightly decreased from 2007 to 2012. Women, rural dwellers, older people, those on a lower income and those with only primary education or less show generally higher levels of trust in government. Trust in press (though increasing) and trust in police were both low, while trust in parliament was reported to be falling for all groups.

Civic participation rates vary. While voter turnout is traditionally high, rates of voluntarism, political engagement and participation in protests or demonstrations are low. Men were generally found to be more active than women and young people were more active than older people. With recent events at Taksim Square, which show that the population wants to engage to a greater extent in political decision-making, there seems to be a need to develop and institutionalise other (less violent) means for people to voice their opinions and take part in decision-making processes.

Voluntarism is quite underdeveloped in Turkey, although the UNDP reports it is growing. EQLS data show that Turkey is lagging behind in important fields such as community and social services, education, culture, sports and professional services. Awareness and understanding of voluntarism should be improved. As the UNDP report points out, a national strategy on volunteerism and the use of modern technologies would aid this cause.

A growing number of Turkish respondents (six out of 10 in 2012) report feeling optimistic about the future. Many report feeling that what they do is worthwhile (75%) and that they feel close to people in their neighbourhood (73%). Nevertheless, a smaller proportion feel they are free to decide what to do with their life than in the EU28 and many in Turkey feel that they seldom have enough time to do things they really enjoy.

Growing feelings of exclusion have become an issue both in Turkey and the EU, with ‘life being too complicated’ and ‘not being recognised for what one is doing’ reported as the main causes of this in the EQLS. The proportion who feel they are looked down upon because of their job or income has also increased.

Increasing numbers of Turkish citizens (13% in 2012) feel left out of society. This issue needs to be addressed for the country to advance as an inclusive society, and to make sure that all people benefit from and have the opportunity to contribute to the country’s modernisation, social life and growth. One of the AKP’s main success stories is that it has transformed conservative, devout, strongly religious groups who, it is claimed, saw themselves as ‘second class citizens’

into ‘proud, first class citizens’. In other words, they brought ‘the periphery to the centre’. However, secular and western-oriented groups increasingly feel excluded, which might be reflected in the above findings. Older people may also require monitoring in this regard.

Conclusions 7

Fact-based summaries with policy pointers can be found at the end of each chapter. This section offers an overview of developments in quality of life in Turkey from 2003 to 2012 and provides more general policy implications.

Turkey has made huge strides in ensuring the **quality of life**, particularly through the improved provision of public services and economic well-being. This is reflected in the increasing satisfaction of the population with education and health services as well as improving rates of employment. On most parameters of quality of life, Turkey is converging with EU average figures and in many cases has overtaken the lowest-performing EU states. However, improvements come from a low base and the visible satisfaction of the population with positive developments perhaps disguises the fact that there are still many challenges ahead.

In terms of **economic well-being**, there is still evidence of poverty, even if the general standard of living has improved. Deprivation needs to be addressed, especially in rural areas. Deprivation is still an issue for many people in Turkey where, in 2012, more than one-third could not afford to invite friends or family for a drink or a meal at least once a month and more than 40% could not afford a meal with meat, chicken or fish every second day, to keep their home adequately warm or to buy new rather than second-hand clothes. Large differences in deprivation exist regarding income level, education level and, to a lesser extent, age. As a rule, younger people, those on a higher income or with a higher education reported fewer problems with deprivation. Although there are differences with regard to gender and location, with men and urban dwellers better off, these factors have a smaller impact.

In terms of **gender equality** issues, the participation of women in the labour force, despite having improved dramatically, remains low at half the EU average. This is an issue that needs to be addressed, along with the participation of women in other spheres of public life, such as political and civic realms. Interestingly, conflict between men and women is seen to have risen, so changing the situation of women might well lead to additional tensions in the modernisation of social life. It should be noted that Turkey still ranks very low on various international indexes of gender equality, such as those of the UNDP or World Economic Forum.

Relatively high rates of **informal employment** in the Turkish labour market is an important structural problem. For example, it limits people's ability to access bank credit or social welfare benefits and leads to an underestimation of the amount of economic activity in the economy. It also compromises the ability of the state to raise revenue to pay for reforms.

The provision of **public services** has improved greatly in Turkey, which is greatly appreciated by the population. However, some services still cause problems. For example distance from a doctor and cost of seeing one might still pose barriers to healthcare for some.

The rapid **urbanisation** of Turkey has brought many benefits, but also its own problems. Pollution and the quality of urban neighbourhoods – including drinking water, noise and litter – now need to be addressed. On a related point, the quality of the housing infrastructure still remains below the general European level and should be improved.

Educational provision has improved greatly – a gain which is also appreciated by the population – but many still leave school early (three times as many as the EU average). A much smaller proportion of the population has third-level qualifications than in Europe: addressing this is a priority in order to develop a skilled and knowledge-based workforce for Turkey's future. With widespread criticism related to recent reforms and low educational performance, there is room for further improvement in this area.

Family remains the cornerstone of society in Turkey. A strong social support network means that people have others to turn to in times of crisis. However, there is some evidence to suggest that young people may view the family as somewhat restrictive. Improvements in public services could lead to alternative and more public forms of welfare.

Civic participation is low, in common with many southern European countries. Improving the channels of formal communication with policymakers could make the recent protests less likely in the future. In this context, creating structures of civil society through which citizens could lobby or improve their situation would be a priority. This would also be likely to improve levels of trust and create a better relationship between government and citizens.

Recent years have seen an unprecedented **polarisation** of Turkish society. Inequality is high and people perceive tensions between social groups including religious, racial and ethnic groups, between those with different sexual orientations and between rich and poor. There seems to be a problem of intolerance in Turkish society, which sets it apart from mainstream European societies. This is a major threat to the healthy functioning of a democratic system of government.

Since the Taksim Square protests of May–June 2013 and more recent protests, the EU has become increasingly worried about the violation of basic **human rights** and the rule of law in Turkey. Recently, the social media services Twitter and YouTube were temporarily banned in Turkey.

Another area of tension could arise from the different ways in which **younger people and older people** benefit from modernisation. Equal attention should be paid to how Turkey's large population of young people is integrated into society and to ensuring that older people are not left behind in these developments.

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Table A1: *EQLS variables used in analysis (2003, 2007, 2012)*

Sociodemographic characteristics used in gap analysis	Coding	
HH2a: Gender (binary)	1 (male)	2 (female)
Y11_Agecategory: Age (categories)	1 (18-24)	5 (65+)
Y11_RuralUrban: Living area (binary)	1 (rural)	2 (urban)
Y11_Incomequartiles_percapita: Income quartiles	1 (lowest quartile)	4 (highest quartile)
Y03_Q47 resp. Y11_Education: Education (categories)	1 (primary or less)	3 (tertiary)

Sociodemographic characteristics used in multivariate regression analysis	Coding	
Y11_HH2b: Age (binary)	< 35 years (1)	35+ years (2)
Y11_RuralUrban: Living area (binary)	1 (rural)	2 (urban)
HH2a: Gender (binary)	1 (male)	2 (female)
Y03_Q47 resp. Y11_Education: Education (binary)	Primary or less (1)	Secondary or tertiary (2)
Q19: At least one out of six accommodation problems	No (1)	Yes (2)
Q58 household is able to make ends meet	1 (easy)	2 (difficult)

Notes: Question numbers refer to those in the EQLS 3 questionnaire (see <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2012/642/en/1/EF12642EN.pdf>);
Sources: *EQLS, 2003*; *EQLS, 2007*; *EQLS, 2012*.

Table A2: *Quality of Life 2012 in Turkey and EU28*

	Turkey	Range within EU28				EU28
		Minimum		Maximum		
Life satisfaction (scale of 1–10)	6.6	Bulgaria	5.5	Denmark	8.4	7.1
Happiness (scale of 1–10)	6.9	Bulgaria	6.3	Denmark	8.2	7.4
Optimism about future (% ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’)	59%	Greece	20%	Sweden	85%	52%
Satisfaction with health (scale of 1–10)	7.5	Latvia	6.5	Cyprus	8.4	7.3
Mental well-being (scale of 1–100)	56	Latvia	56	Denmark	70	63
Satisfaction with standard of living (scale of 1–10)	5.9	Bulgaria	4.7	Denmark	8.3	6.9
Difficulty making ends meet (% ‘difficult’ or ‘very difficult’)	22%	Denmark	3%	Greece	50%	17%
Number of items people cannot afford (scale of 1–6)	2.9	Luxembourg	0.3	Bulgaria	2.9	1.2
Informal debts (% in arrears over last 12 months)	21%	Malta	0%	Italy	14%	8%
Work–life conflict (on any dimension, % women)	81%	Italy	44%	Cyprus	83%	60%
Work–life conflict (on any dimension, % men)	75%	Netherlands	35%	Croatia	77%	54%
Doing household tasks at least several days a week, difference between women and men (percentage points)	72	Finland	11	Greece	57	30
Women, economically inactive, willing to work (%)	56%	Kosovo	45%	Iceland	91%	70%
Cost as a problem to see a doctor (% very difficult)	17%	United Kingdom	1%	Greece	31%	9%
Household with children <12 years using childcare services	7%	Bulgaria	13%	Sweden	74%	26%
Proportion using public transport	97%	Cyprus	50%	Greece	95%	87%
Trust in people (scale of 1–10)	4.9	Cyprus	2.0	Finland	7.2	5.1
Trust in government (scale of 1–10)	6.3	Greece	2.1	Luxembourg	6.5	4.0
Trust in local authorities (scale 1–10)	5.8	Croatia	3.4	Luxembourg	6.7	5.2
Tension between different racial or ethnic groups (% perceiving ‘a lot of tension’)	40%	Lithuania	16%	Czech Republic	68%	37%
Tension between poor people and rich people (% perceiving ‘a lot of tension’)	42%	Denmark	4%	Hungary	70%	36%

	Turkey	Range within EU28				EU28
		Minimum		Maximum		
Index of perceived social exclusion (scale of 1–10)	2.4	Denmark	1.6	Cyprus	3.0	2.2
Participation in voluntary work	20%	Bulgaria	13%	Austria	53%	32%
Civic and political involvement	8%	Hungary	8%	Sweden	51%	25%

Source: *EQLS 2012; authors' calculations.*

Over the past decade, Turkey has undergone huge economic and social change. This report uses Eurofound's European Quality of Life Survey to capture changes and developments in the quality of life of Turkish people, measured at three periods over the past decade: 2003, 2007 and 2012. The report examines the key improvements in quality of life over this period and investigates whether all social groups benefited equally. It explores the impact of recent policy changes and charts new expectations that may be emerging in Turkey. It finds that people in Turkey became much more satisfied with their lives over the period; they overtook the EU average in terms of satisfaction with health services and self-assessed health; poverty and material deprivation diminished. However, Turkey has a very high proportion of early school leavers, and gender inequality remains stark.

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) is a tripartite European Union Agency, whose role is to provide knowledge in the area of social and work-related policies. Eurofound was established in 1975 by Council Regulation (EEC) No. 1365/75, to contribute to the planning and design of better living and working conditions in Europe.